

Egypt detains 4th Israeli in spying case

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has detained a fourth Israeli in connection with an espionage case, an Israeli embassy spokesman said on Wednesday. Egypt had officially notified the embassy that David Ovitz, a second-hand furniture dealer, was detained on Tuesday for "having trade links" with Fares Subhi Masrafi, one of a family of three Israelis in detention, spokesman Meir Cohen said. Mr. Masrafi, 41, and his daughter Fayga were arrested last week on suspicion of spying for Israel. Mr. Masrafi's son Maged was arrested on Monday trying to cross into Israel from Egypt with a forged passport, security sources said. Egypt is holding all three Israeli Arabs at a maximum-security prison in Cairo but has not yet officially charged them. Cohen said it was not clear where Mr. Ovitz, a Jew in his 50s, was picked up. Israeli embassy officials would be allowed to see all the suspects after the investigations was concluded, he added. Security sources said all three Masrafis had confessed to spying for the Jewish state in the first such case since the two former enemies signed a peace treaty in 1979.

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Weekender, next week

DUE to this week's severe weather conditions, which inevitably led to reduced workforces at the Jordan Times, the Weekender does not appear today. The Jordan Times regrets any inconvenience this might cause our readers, who should rest assured that every effort will be made to maintain regularity and standard of the newspaper, however the weather changes from now on.

Hamas says its bombs injured 3 Israelis

GAZA (R) — The Islamic resistance movement (Hamas) claimed responsibility on Wednesday for bomb attacks that injured a 22-year-old Israeli woman and two soldiers in the occupied Gaza Strip. Arab saboteurs scrawled on the walls of Nuseirat refugee camp, home to 30,000 Palestinians, claimed responsibility in the name of the Kassam brigades, the military wing of Hamas. The group — named for the Arab military commander Izz al Deen al Kassam who fought British mandatory authorities in Palestine in the 1930s — is known to have carried out attacks against the Israeli army and suspected Arab collaborators.

2 Palestinians killed in territories

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Arabs killed two Palestinians in separate incidents in the Israeli-occupied territories on Wednesday, the Israeli army said. An army spokesman said Arabs in a car pushed a Palestinian out of the vehicle and shot him on the outskirts of Tulikarm in the occupied West Bank. He died in hospital later. In the occupied Gaza Strip, police found a dead man near Deir al Balah town. Palestinian sources said Ahmad Abu Amra, 26, was stabbed to death. The reason for the killings was not known.

Weizman meets Boutros-Ghali

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Former Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman discussed the Middle East peace process during a 45-minute meeting on Tuesday with Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. Weizman, who recently resigned from the Israeli Knesset (parliament), told reporters it was a "bit of an emotional meeting" since the two men had been friends since the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited Jerusalem in 1977. They had also worked together closely on the Camp David peace accords. Boutros-Ghali is a former Egyptian deputy prime minister and minister of state.

Greek premier visits Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis of Greece arrived in Kuwait City Wednesday on a short visit aimed at boosting relations with his country. Kuwait is the second leg of a Gulf tour that took him to Saudi Arabia. Mr. Mitsotakis was scheduled to depart for Abu Dhabi on Thursday. Mr. Mitsotakis was met at the airport by his Kuwaiti counterpart, Sheikh Saeed Al Abdullah Al Sabah. He then visited the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, at Bayan palace. The Greek premier was accompanied by a high-ranking delegation that included the minister of economy and a number of businessmen.

Strong winds in Gulf slow oil loadings

DUBAI (R) — Strong northwest winds have slowed crude oil loadings from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf exporters, shipping sources said on Wednesday. Winds of between 20 to 25 knots have been causing high seas with waves up to three metres since Tuesday. The wind was expected to weaken overnight, weather reports said. Shipping sources said crude loadings at Saudi Arabia's main Ras Tanura and Juaymah terminals.

U.S. wants Israel to halt building in all occupied land

By Alan Elsner
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The United States has told Israel it wanted a halt to new housing construction in all the occupied territories in exchange for loan guarantees of \$10 billion.

In an interview with Reuters on Tuesday, a senior official in President George Bush's administration denied reports that the United States had offered to allow Israel to continue building houses in east Jerusalem, which it occupied in the 1967 Middle East war, under the package.

The official said U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who discussed the loan issue last Friday with Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval, had not distinguished between different areas occupied by Israel in 1967.

At this stage of the discussion, the United States was demanding a halt to housing starts applied to the occupied territories as a single entity. That would include east Jerusalem along with all other

occupied land.

"The discussions we have had about which housing starts would be tolerable and which would not have made no distinction about which territories are included," the official said.

"We're talking about settlements beyond the 1967 lines. We have not discussed this as an issue of geographical location."

The official said there was still a wide gap between Israel and the United States over the terms under which the money may be made available.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is already finding the U.S. demand for a halt to new building in settlements difficult to swallow.

But even many Israelis who oppose settlements deeply believe that Jerusalem is in a special category and must always remain united under sole Israeli control.

About 100,000 Israelis live in settlements, but a further 150,000 live in Jewish neighbourhoods in east Jerusalem which ring the hills around the city.

Israel wants the \$10 billion

spread over five years to help its economy stand the strains caused by the immigration of some 400,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union over the past two years.

With unemployment already at a two-decade high of 11 per cent, the Israelis fear that without the money their economy could tumble into a deep and extended crisis.

But Mr. Baker has laid out unprecedentedly tough terms for the aid, to the extent that many Israelis, American Jewish leaders and U.S. officials no longer believe a deal is possible.

Mr. Baker is not only insisting on a freeze on new housing starts but also intends to deduct a dollar from the amount loaned for every dollar Israel spends on private and public housing in the territories and on infrastructure associated with such settlements.

Israel would be allowed to complete a specified number of houses already under construction but not begin building any new ones. If it did so, Washington would scrap the deal.



George Bush

Bush officially announces candidacy

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush, struggling with the stagnant U.S. economy and a drastic drop in his popularity, formally announced on Wednesday that he will seek a second four-year term in the White House.

"I want to continue serving as your president four more years. So from this moment on, I am a candidate for president of the United States, officially," the Republican president told about 1,000 cheering supporters gathered at a Washington hotel ballroom draped in red, white and blue.

The backdrop read, "Victory '92."

"I came here to do important work and I finish what I start," said Mr. Bush, who was introduced by First Lady Barbara Bush and shared the stage with Vice President Dan Quayle and his wife Marilyn.

Immediately after the speech, Mr. Bush was scheduled to fly to New Hampshire, where he faces a nagging challenge from conservative commentator Pat Buchanan in the state's first-in-the-nation primary election next Tuesday.

No one expects Mr. Buchanan, running an "America first" campaign in the economically hard-hit state, to win. But a strong showing by the former aide to presidents Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan would be an embarrassment for Mr. Bush.

A New USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll showed Mr. Bush leading Mr. Buchanan 63 per cent to 29 per cent in New Hampshire.

The winner of the Republican nomination, probably Mr. Bush, will face the Democratic party challenger in the Nov. 3 presidential election. Five major Democratic candidates are seeking the party's nomination.

In New Hampshire, former Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas appears to have surged

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Prime interest rates drop to 9.5% Jordan prepares for tough negotiations with creditors

By Samir Shafiq

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prime customers can now obtain credit from banks in Jordan at an interest as low as 9.5 per cent, the lowest rate since interest rates were floated in the Kingdom about three years ago.

Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi told a group of journalists at a gathering Wednesday evening that interest rates on loans have declined over the months and that the flotation of rates, which was part of an economic adjustment programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was successful although at the time when

the decision was implemented borrowing cost climbed to almost 13 per cent.

He said banks may charge above 10 per cent depending "on the quality of clients."

Regarding Jordan's new economic adjustment programme agreed with the IMF last year, Dr. Nabulsi said that the fund's board of executives would be meeting towards the end of this month to approve the programme. He said there had been a delay in obtaining the IMF approval to enable the Kingdom to press ahead in negotiations with creditors for debt rescheduling arrangements.

He said that one or two measures, which he declined to iden-

tify, have hindered the deal with the IMF but, he noted, that the government was committed to those measures which involve the revenue side of the budget. He clarified his statement by pointing to the ratio of budget deficit to the gross domestic product (GDP) and said that under the adjustment programme there should be an annual reduction of four to five per cent in the deficit which stood at about 20 per cent in 1990 but only went down to about 17 per cent in the 1992 budget.

Dr. Nabulsi revealed that Jordan's total debt now stood at \$7.2 billion down from \$8 billion, after

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Shooting breaks out in Algiers; students demonstrate

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Shooting broke out on Wednesday in parts of the Algerian capital where security forces hunted the killers of eight policemen, Algiers radio said.

Witnesses also reported a brief firefight on the heights of Algiers late on Tuesday.

"Several shots were heard this morning around El Harrach, Belcourt ... and Bab El Oued," the radio said. It also reported shots in the city's May 1st square.

The three suburbs are strongholds of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) which took a landslide lead in Algeria's first multiparty general election last December.

The poll was scrapped last month. New rulers imposed a

state of emergency last Sunday after widespread protests from FIS militants in which some 500 people were killed and nearly 300 wounded.

Belcourt is also the heartland of the so-called "Afghans" — Algerians who spent time either fighting or training with rebels against Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

The "Afghans," among the hardline supporters of the FIS, were prominent in its marches and demonstrations last June which led then to a four-month state of siege.

El Watan newspaper said a woman was with Afghan extremists arrested in the western area of Tipaza on Tuesday. It was the first time a woman had been

linked to extremist groups.

The Algerian news agency APS said the group belonged to the extremist Etefrik Oual Hidjra (Sin and Expiation) organisation.

Rifles, military uniforms and a plan to attack gendarmie barracks had also been recovered. The group was believed to have carried out attacks on security forces last December, on the eve of the election.

Late on Tuesday, four youths believed to be fundamentalists fled a mosque as police apparently went to question them, witnesses said.

Shots rang out after two of the youths took refuge in a shop in Rue Bachir Ibrahim, several

(Continued on page 5)

Pathologist says torture killed Akawi; Amnesty urges investigation

NEW YORK (Agencies) — A New York pathologist who took part in an autopsy on Palestinian prisoner Mustafa Akawi said on Tuesday he died of a heart attack brought on by torture, disputing official Israeli accounts.

Dr. Michael Baden, director of forensic sciences for the New York state police, said autopsy results indicated that Akawi, 33, "died of a heart attack precipitated by the emotional pressure, physical exertion, and freezing temperature he was forced to withstand, along with lack of proper medical care."

The Palestinian, arrested Jan. 22, in a roundup of suspected

members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, died last Wednesday at a Shin Bet secret police interrogation centre in the occupied territories. His family said he was tortured to death.

The Chief of Shin Bet, Israel's secret police, told a parliamentary committee in Jerusalem on Tuesday that the man had been pronounced fit by a prison doctor before he died in an interrogation cell of a heart attack.

Some members of the Israeli parliament have demanded an inquiry into allegations of torture, and the U.S. State Department has also called for an investigation.

The Shin Bet chief, whose identity is a national secret, appeared at a closed-door meeting of the foreign affairs and defence committee, a parliamentary official told reporters.

It was unclear whether the Shin Bet chief confirmed or denied that Akawi had been tortured.

The chief said there was no record of any problems when Akawi underwent a routine medical examination after his Jan. 22 arrest. He was deemed a fit prisoner.

Hours before his death Akawi

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Libya braces for possible attack

WASHINGTON (R) — Libya is gearing for a possible punitive Western military strike by hiding mobile missiles and strengthening air defences, a U.S. official said on Wednesday.

"We've had considerable evidence that the Libyans are concerned about some offensive military action," said the official, who is familiar with the steps Libya has taken.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Libya had been shifting Soviet-made Scud missiles to safeguard them from attack and bolstering its air defences.

"This is something that has been evident for many weeks," he said.

The Libyan moves, first reported in the Washington Times on Wednesday, followed growing Western pressure to surrender two Libyans allegedly involved in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, on Dec. 21, 1988.

Libya is also being pressed to cooperate in investigating the 1989 bombing of a French UTA airliner over Niger in which 171 people died.

Vice President Dan Quayle said on Monday during a visit to

Britain that U.S. patience was wearing thin with Libya over its failure to heed a Jan. 21 U.N. Security Council resolution seeking extradition of the two suspects.

"Qadhafi had better realise we are serious," Mr. Quayle said in an interview on BBC television. "You just have to look at the past to see that we have the political will to make these kinds of requests happen."

In 1986, U.S. warplanes bombed Libya after Washington accused Mr. Qadhafi of involvement in a blast at a West Berlin discotheque.

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Floods reportedly sweep mines to east bank of Jordan River

AMMAN (AP) — Tens of land mines along the Israeli ceasefire lines with the Kingdom have been swept away by river floods to the Jordanian side, farmers and government sources reported Wednesday.

One farmer, speaking on condition he not be identified, said his farm in northern Shuma, 102 kilometres north of the Dead Sea, "was full of land mines and as a result it is dangerous to enter that area."

"I have informed concerned Jordanian authorities about the issue and they said that the explo-

sives were washed off to the Jordan Valley area by river waters from Israel," he said.

A government source, also speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed the report but did not know whether a public announcement would be made on the issue.

"Concerned sides have been informed and we estimate that tens of mines from Israel drifted to our side by river floods last week," the source said. He refused to provide any further information, including the exact number of the mines.

The ministries of interior and

agriculture declined to comment. Jordan shares a ceasefire line of 645 kilometres with Israel. All lands on both sides of the frontier are planted with mines to prevent infiltration across the borders.

Rain and snow during the Middle East's harshest winter in decades have flooded the Jordan River last week for the first time since 1952.

Police said the two bridges across the Jordan River, the country's main link with the West Bank, have been under water since last Monday and would remain closed for traffic.

PLO denies Arafat insulted Jews

PARIS (AP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation denied Wednesday that a telephone conversation where PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat allegedly called Jews "dogs" and "dirt" ever took place.

Extracts of the purported call between Mr. Arafat and Ibrahim Yasser, the PLO's representative in Paris, were broadcast Tuesday by the U.S.-based Cable Network News.

"I categorically deny the comments attributed to President Yasser Arafat and myself and reserve all my rights to action against the authors of this media manipulation," Mr. Souss declared.

The tape, he said, was aimed at masking "bellicose" Israeli intentions in the Middle East peace talks and slurring the PLO chairman and himself.

CNN reported that it obtained the taped conversation from a Western police service. Experts familiar with Mr. Arafat's voice said that the comments attributed to him could be authentic, but that they could not be absolutely sure, CNN reported.

The conversation purportedly took place Jan. 30, a day after Palestinian leader George Habash arrived in Paris for hos-

pital treatment of a reported stroke.

The presence of Mr. Habash, who leads the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, caused a political scandal and led to the sacking or resignation of five government officials.

France allowed Mr. Habash to leave when doctors determined he was unable to answer questions about terrorist activities, and that no national or international warrants were outstanding against him.

According to an English translation of the Arabic conversation, Mr. Arafat reportedly found France's treatment of Mr. Habash "shameful."

Mr. Souss reportedly told Mr. Arafat that the right-wing opposition and Jews were to blame for the uproar.

Mr. Arafat allegedly replied: "The Jews at work. Damn their fathers. Dogs, filthy, dirt. All this for one sick man. I took care of and treated their ill and sick (PoWs). But trash is always trash."

Yitzhak Eldan, Israel's charge d'affaires in Paris, said that the comments a PLO "double language: a conciliatory and diplomatic language for the west and a virulent language full of hate when they speak among

themselves."

Mr. Arafat reportedly told Mr. Souss to inform the French foreign ministry that Mr. Habash was a Palestinian leader and that the PLO would not "allow this degradation."

The PLO chairman told Mr. Souss sarcastically to thank France, which he accused of arrogance, according to CNN's transcript of the conversation.

"And thanks to the rotten Jews, with whom we will settle accounts in the future," Mr. Arafat allegedly said.

Mr. Souss reportedly accused Jews of orchestrating a media campaign against Mr. Habash: "Even for a sick man — Israel chases us everywhere."

Mr. Arafat allegedly responded: "For a sick man? Did we send him to have fun on the Champs-Elysee? ... I am speaking to you on a bugged telephone, and let them release it on the television."

Mr. Souss said after the broadcast aired Tuesday that he would sue CNN for defamation. Steve Haworth, a CNN spokesman in Atlanta, Georgia stood behind "the veracity of the report."

Mr. Souss told Reuters on Wednesday: "I categorically deny the statements attributed to me

and President Arafat and we reserve every right to take action against the authors of this piece of media manipulation. We intend to sue both CNN and all those who accuse me personally and President Arafat of anti-Semitism."

"President Arafat and I discussed the Habash affair throughout. I kept him informed of what was happening as was only natural, but obscene statements of this kind were never made."

Mr. Souss suggested the conversation was a montage of quotes taken from real conversations between him and Mr. Arafat plus some completely fabricated quotes.

He said he had heard the CNN broadcast but added: "I did not recognise my voice at all. As for Arafat's it is very easy to imitate a voice."

"This is a set-up job. There are lies, cuts in the conversation ... it is a fabrication."

"It's quite clear why (this was done). I think Israel in this period has every interest in undermining the credibility of the PLO and its ambassador in Paris, most of whose friends are Jewish, if not Israeli ... accuse me of anti-Semitism? Are they serious? Half of my friends are Jewish."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

De La Billiere introduces his successor

ABU DHABI (R) — The commander of British forces during the Gulf war is visiting the region to introduce his successor as Middle East adviser to Britain's defence ministry. Lieutenant-General Sir De La Billiere, who left active service shortly after the Gulf war ended, and his successor Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Wilkes on Wednesday called on UAE Chief-of-staff Lieutenant-General Mohammed Saeed Al Badi. The embassy said the British generals would leave the United Arab Emirates on Saturday. De La Billiere, a former special forces commander, is due to retire from the British Army later this year. Britain has no permanent military presence in the UAE but British warships, on permanent patrol in the Gulf, often visit UAE ports for rest and supplies.

Aoun to move house in France

PARIS (R) — Lebanese Christian leader Michel Aoun, in exile in France, is moving out of his Mediterranean seaside villa in Marseille to the central city of Orleans, French government officials said on Wednesday. Aoun, who led an ill-fated military campaign to expel Syrian forces from Lebanon in 1988-90, wanted to be nearer Paris, where most of France's Christian Lebanese expatriates live. He was also concerned that the villa Gaby in Marseille, where he has lived under heavy police guard since he arrived in France in August, might not be secure enough. "Aoun finally decided on Orleans. The French Interior Ministry has given its agreement in principle," an official at the government office for the Orleans region said. No date has been set for the move. Aoun abandoned his campaign after a Syrian-led attack on his Beirut headquarters in October 1990. He took refuge in the French embassy and left for France 10 months later. One of the conditions of his transfer agreed by the French and Lebanese governments was that he could not live in Paris. Orleans is about 100 kilometres south of the capital.

Ethiopia trying to stop banditry — president

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi has said gangs of former soldiers are terrorising parts of the country, the state-run Ethiopian News Agency (ENA) reported on Tuesday. ENA said Meles told foreign diplomats on Monday his government was trying to stop ethnic clashes and bandit gangs marauding through the Horn of Africa nation. He said the armed gangs involved demobilised troops from ousted Dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam's 350,000-strong army which was defeated by rebels nine months ago. He blamed unnamed political groups for promoting disorder. Meles told the diplomats that the new transitional government, made up of 24 mainly ethnic political groups, was "exerting maximum efforts" to restore law and order, ENA said. Earlier this week ENA said government forces had killed 83 former troops and party members of Mengistu's Marxist Party and captured 1,262 in recent operations.

Lawyers ask judge to dismiss Rabbi's lawsuit against Polish cardinal

NEW YORK (AP) — Lawyers representing Poland's Roman Catholic primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, asked a judge Tuesday to dismiss a New York Rabbi's defamation lawsuit. Glemp's attorneys want U.S. District Judge Robert Patterson Jr. to throw out the lawsuit because two Polish courts already determined the cardinal didn't intend to defame Rabbi Abraham Weiss. They also question whether Glemp was properly served with legal papers Sept. 25 outside Albany's Cathedral of Immaculate Conception. Glemp was on a 19-day tour of U.S. cities. Weiss alleges Glemp defamed him in a 1989 sermon in Czestochowa, Poland. He said Glemp falsely accused him of planning to kill nuns living at a convent in Auschwitz, the site of the Nazi death camp in southern Poland. The Rabbi, head of the Hebrew Institute in the Bronx borough, led six students in a 1989 sit-in outside the convent to protest its establishment on the site where Nazis killed about more than a million Jews. During the protest, several people in Weiss' group scaled a wall into the cloistered convent. Weiss maintains his group was dragged away after workers threw buckets of water and urine at them. The cardinal says the group was ejected by workers defending the frightened nuns. Weiss said Tuesday he would drop his suit if Glemp, "would just utter one sentence: 'I'm sorry.'" The judge appealed for calm in the case. "It is important in this city and elsewhere that there be a healing process, not demonstrations which cause anger," Patterson said. Attorney and Harvard Law School professor Alan Dershowitz told the judge the lawsuit was meant to help ease tensions. "The best way to keep demonstrations off the streets is to try (disputes) in the court," said Dershowitz, who is representing Weiss free of charge. The Vatican has ordered the nuns out of the convent by October.

Resistance leader denounces Iran's leadership

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — An Iranian resistance leader said Tuesday that in 15 years of rule Iran's Islamic fundamentalist leadership had failed. On the occasion of the anniversary of the Islamic revolution's rise to power, Massoud Rajavi said the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his followers "have brought nothing to the Iranian people but pain, suffering, misery, misfortune, destruction and homelessness." Rajavi's organisation said in a statement. The group, the people's Mojahedin of Iran, said Rajavi spoke to the Iranian people in a radio broadcast as the revolutionary leaders celebrated the anniversary in Tehran with a mass demonstration. The Mojahedin statement telefaxed from Paris to the Associated Press in Nicosia did not say where the broadcast was transmitted, but the organisation operates broadcast facilities inside Iraq near the Iranian border, where it also bases its national liberation army of Iran. "Mr. Rajavi noted that the Khomeini regime's achievements for the people of Iran in its 13-year rule include 100,000 executions, more than 70 torture techniques and the suppression of ethnic and religious minorities," the statement said. It cited statistics outlining the current economic plight of President Hashemi Rafsanjani's government and said that "despite the devastated socio-economic situation, Rafsanjani and company have concentrated on rebuilding their decapitated war machine, with astronomical purchases of conventional weapons and nuclear technology."

Rationing prevents famine — Saddam

BAGHDAD (R) — A belittling Saddam Hussein says a government subsidised rationing system, the cornerstone of Iraq's survival under sanctions, has saved the nation from starvation. But in remarks published by Iraqi papers on Wednesday, Saddam acknowledged that prices on the runaway free market were high.

The government would carry on providing subsidised rations and even expand them to include more basic family items, he pledged.

President Saddam, who has said he will shun luxury items such as new clothes for a year and has urged his compatriots to do likewise, said "the price of an expensive dress does not worry me."

"What worries me is to see a citizen unable to find the food-stuffs he needs to live."

President Saddam said the rationing system, which meets about one third of every family's needs from cheap rice to razor blades, ensured that Iraqis had "the cheapest food in the world."

The Iraqi leader, decorating 33 army officers for bravery in the "mother of battles," Iraq's term for the Gulf war, said Iraqis ate better now than they did when the Baath Party came to power in a 1968 coup.

"Regardless of the sanctions, we do not suffer from starvation, as is the case in many countries throughout the world. No Iraqi is as hungry now as he was before the (1968) revolution," President Saddam said.

Council rejects cash handout for Kuwaitis

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's consultative council yielded to government pressure on Wednesday and rejected proposals for more big cash handouts to citizens.

It said the emirate was unable to afford the payments and declared such generosity could jeopardise its claims for financial compensation from Iraq.

The National Council said in a report that proposals to pay up to 20,000 dinars (\$66,000) to every Kuwaiti family would put a heavy burden on an economy ravaged by Iraq's August 1990 invasion.

The council, which has no legislative powers, urged the government last July to make cash payments to Kuwaiti families to soothe their suffering as a result of seven months of Iraqi occupation.

Foreign aid workers and some Iraqi doctors say they are now seeing cases of malnutrition among the young and old, something that they had never witnessed in Iraq before the Gulf crisis.

The government says disease, food shortages and shortages of medicine have killed close to 100,000 Iraqis, one third of them children.

Food is excluded from U.N. sanctions imposed to punish Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait but Baghdad complains that it cannot import all the food it needs because its overseas assets are frozen by hostile governments.

Iraqis complain privately that their wages cannot keep pace with prices on the free market, where basics such as flour and rice are 20 times that of the rationed level.

The government has printed billions of dinars to pay its bills and rewarded the army and key government workers with pay rises, adding a further twist to inflation, which has not been officially computed since before the Gulf war.

"Five years ago 5,000 dinars (\$16,000 at official rates) would have bought a car or kept a family for one year. Now you need 5,000 dinars a month to get by," an Iraqi engineer said.

George Bush said in a written report to Congress that Iraq posed an "unusual and extraordinary threat to the national and foreign policy" of America which justified continued U.N. sanctions.

Saddam reinstates sacked son-in-law

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has appointed his son-in-law, Hussein Kamel Hassan, a presidential adviser, in a move which formally restores the former defence minister to official grace.

The ruling Revolution Command Council, which is chaired by the Iraqi president, said in a statement on Wednesday that Kamel had been appointed an adviser to the president and would enjoy all the privileges of a cabinet minister.

President Saddam sacked Kamel last Nov. 6 and replaced him with his cousin, Interior Minister Ali Hassan Al-Majied, in an unexpected reshuffle only weeks after Kamel had received the country's highest award, the Mother of Battles medal.

Kamel was not given another job in that reshuffle, which put the known hardliner Majied in control of the army and the problems it faces in quelling unrest in the Kurdish north and Shiite south of the country.

Diplomats said at the time that Kamel's demotion appeared only temporary since President Saddam rarely discarded senior figures altogether and drew heavily on relatives and associates from his northern Tikrit home area to form the government.

"He likes to shuffle the pack, he doesn't get rid of cards," said one East European diplomat at the time.

Kamel's appointment was not entirely unexpected since he has twice been seen in public in the past month and referred to with his full rank of lieutenant-general.

About four weeks ago he attended a meeting the president organised on the rehabilitation of Iraqi industry from Gulf war damage. Kamel is a former minister of heavy industry.

Last week he accompanied the Iraqi President on a tour to a factory rebuilt after the Gulf conflict and was referred to as a "former overseer of Iraq's heavy industry."

Other relatives in the government include Saddam's half-brother Wathban Ibrahim Al-Hassan, who was appointed interior minister to replace Majied, and Barazan Al-Takriti, Iraq's representative to the United Nations in Geneva.

Libya hints at cooperation over airline bombings — diplomats

UNITED NATIONS — Libya says it will help with French inquiries into the 1989 downing of an airliner over Africa and diplomats say it seems more willing than previously to cooperate over the bombing of a Pan Am plane over Scotland.

Sources at the United Nations said the Libyan message, contained in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, gave hopeful signs on U.S. and British demands over the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie in which 270 people died.

Washington and London have been pressing Libya to surrender two Libyan intelligence officials, identified as Abdel Baset Ali Mohamed Al-Meghrabi and Al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah, so they can face trial abroad for the Lockerbie attack.

But a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) official, Vincent Cannistraro, said on Tuesday the two had dropped from sight and had been reported dead by some Arab sources.

The former chief of counter-terrorism operations said Libya ruler Muammar Qadhafi could not afford to hand them over for fear they might implicate Libya in state-sponsored terrorism.

On Tuesday, a British lawyer dismissed Mr. Cannistraro's re-

marks, saying the wanted officials were alive and well.

"They are alive and well. I left them, at Tripoli time, this evening about a quarter to nine," Solicitor Stephen Mitchell told Reuters by telephone from the Libyan capital.

On Wednesday, the Washington Times newspaper quoted unnamed intelligence sources as saying Libya was hiding its Soviet-designed mobile missile and tightening air defences in preparation for a possible Western military strike.

The daily said the missiles had been moved to remote areas and covered with camouflage netting. It said there were signs that orders had been given to strengthen anti-aircraft defences around the capital Tripoli.

In April 1986 U.S. warplanes struck Libyan targets. The raid was prompted by the bombing of a Berlin nightclub in which three U.S. servicemen died.

Libya has denied involvement in the attacks and has so far refused to allow its alleged agents to be tried abroad.

The U.N. sources said the Libyan letter to Mr. Ghali responded to a January 21 Security Council resolution demanding Libya's cooperation over the airline bombings.

The sources said Libya had

requested the U.N. chief to establish unspecified "mechanism" for dealing with U.S. and British demands.

They said this was because there were no relations between Washington, London and Tripoli.

Diplomats, who said they were still unsure how to interpret the Libyan letter, nevertheless thought its implication was that Tripoli appeared more cooperative than before.

The envoys said Libya seemed ready to allow the questioning of four agents by a French magistrate in connection with the downing of a DC-10 airliner belonging to the French Union Des Transport Aeriens (UTA) which blew up over Niger.

A total of 171 people were killed.

But they said it was not immediately clear if Libya was prepared to hand over the agents to France for interrogation or if the magistrate could question them elsewhere.

A French examining magistrate has issued arrest warrants for four agents believed involved in the bombing of the UTA flight.

One of them is Colonel Qadhafi's brother-in-law, Abdallah Senoussi, believed to be a senior official in Libya's intelligence service.

'Britain's anti-Iraq attitude immoral'

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iraqi newspaper owned by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday accused Britain of blocking a shipment of pencils to Iraq under the pretext that they could be used by school children "to produce nuclear bombs."

Babel said on Wednesday: "Britain's attitude toward Iraq since the start of the aggression has been unethical and full of vice."

"The Britons feared the Iraqis will turn the pencils into bombs to be fired against an enemy they planted in the heart of the Arab World (Israel)," the newspaper said.

It gave no details of the charge, the latest levelled at Britain and other members of the U.S.-led coalition which drove Iraqi troops out

Peking reported helping Iran develop missiles

WASHINGTON (AP) — China recently concluded arrangements to sell Iran parts that could be used in the development of a medium-range ballistic missile, according to U.S. intelligence reports.

The deal, and previously disclosed sales of missile technology to Syria, could complicate a decision by the Bush administration on whether to lift sanctions imposed on China last June.

The reports do not establish whether the missile parts already have been delivered to Tehran. That could be critical since China has promised to observe an international agreement to limit the supply of missile technology to third world countries.

But the process of gathering the parts and preparing them for shipment to Iran is under way, according to sources familiar with the reports.

China and Iran have a long arms relationship.

Iran has deployed short-range Silkworm missiles manufactured in China near the entrance to the Gulf. The missiles are designed to attack ships.

According to other reports, China has provided Iran with the design and technology to produce an artillery shell with a range of 40 kilometres.

China has denied repeatedly over the last several years that it is providing weapons technology to Iran, as well as to other countries in the Middle East.

The disclosure that China recently entered into an agreement to help Iran develop a medium-range missile is especially disconcerting to those in and out of government who are fearful the tense Mideast could explode into war.

Secretary of State James Baker elicited a promise from China to observe the 1987 missile technology control regime during a visit to Beijing in November.

Lost youth find fulfillment in Muslim fundamentalism

By Elaine Ganley
The Associated Press

ALGIERS — They are there every day, legions of young men without training, work or purpose, leaning on walls as if the buildings would collapse without them.

They are among Algeria's most desperate and dangerous, the most likely to be drawn into street protests and to take the army's bullets if shooting starts.

They are prime prospects for Muslim fundamentalists, who seduce them with a message of social justice and radical change.

These restless youths also are a prime cause of concern to the ruling military-backed high state committee. It has declared economic recovery a priority, but in the meantime has resorted to firing on fundamentalist converts, who prove their devotion in confrontations with Friday prayers.

Since its creation in 1989, the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front has turned hopelessness into purpose for

many Algerians.

Young fundamentalists believe an Islamic state would end corruption and forge a just society. They tend to view the non-Muslim West as rampant with prostitution, alcoholism and crime.

Those views were reflected by two men, both 22, interviewed in Bab El-Oued, a fundamentalist stronghold.

"They are messengers of God. They give me courage," said Mohammed, a jeweller's apprentice who would not reveal his surname for fear of retaliation by the authorities.

For the other young man — Mohammed Marzouk, who is unemployed — the salvation front was the first entity with any authority to care about his life.

"All the young people have projects in mind, but the future holds nothing," he said. "No one is interested in us. Now we are interested in Islam, and we want an Islamic state to lead the country."

Such young men formed the backbone of mobs that challenged security forces in the riots of October 1988 that ended one-party rule in Algeria. They turned out again in June 1990, backing fundamentalists in a showdown with authorities.

Now, they skirmish with soldiers carrying bayoneted rifles around mosques in fundamentalist neighbourhoods that resemble armed camps each Friday. Some observers suggest the young men are aroused by paramilitary groups, known as "Afghans," whose members were trained in Pakistan or Afghanistan.

One-quarter of Algeria's 25 million people are 30 or younger, but were overlooked by the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front. Of the 1.2 million unemployed, more than two-thirds are between 16 and 29.

Among those aged 18 to 29 who vote, 41 per cent support the salvation front, according to a study by the National Centre for Studies in Applied Economics. The results indicated 21 per cent of Algerian

youth spend their free time in mosques, the second choice after the home.

University students conducted the survey in major cities, distributing questionnaires to cross-sections of the populations.

"This is an identity crisis in this country laid over a terrible economic crisis," said Hadji Ali Smail, a professor at the University of Algiers, and the salvation front "understood perfectly this great need for an identity."

"It knew how to give youth in the poor neighbourhoods confidence," he said. "It showed them they can exist, when the system said they don't exist."

The salvation front coupled its message of hope with clever manipulation of laws governing mosques, which remain outside state control as long as they are unfortified.

By building its own mosques and keeping them in a perpetual state of incompleteness, the front could place its own imams inside to preach against

the state.

Workers painstakingly lay tiles at the Es Sanna Mosque in Bab El-Oued, where the salvation front's formation was announced in 1989. Its rooftop loudspeakers are riddled with bullet holes from the June showdown.

Another showdown is building.

Algeria's ruling council, installed Jan. 16, is systematically isolating the salvation front from its base. Political sermons and gatherings outside mosques have been banned. State-appointed imams are replacing those loyal to the front, and the front's main leaders are in jail.

The movement was sweeping Algeria's first free parliamentary elections when it was dealt its biggest blow last month: the second-round voting was cancelled.

Since then, they have been the focus of a government crackdown. On Sunday, the government announced a state of emergency granting authorities broad powers to make

arrests, ban demonstrations and dissolve local councils.

The front, in a communiqué, has called on Algerians to reject the emergency measures. Front supporters say the movement cannot be crushed.

Flocks of children 4 to 6 years old chant "dawa Islamia" (Islamic state) for visitors outside Es Sanna.

Older youths, formerly delinquents, help enforce public order in their neighbourhoods after joining the salvation front.

Smail, the university professor, lives in Bab El-Oued, but is a critic of the salvation front. His group, the rally of artists, intellectuals and scientists, supports the decision to cancel the elections to lay the groundwork for what the ruling council says would be a real democracy.

The salvation front says an Islamic state is the people's choice. Its leaders envision a land free of the exploitation that has characterised Algeria since independence from France in 1962.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Documentary
18:30	Maguy
19:00	News in French
19:15	Cine
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Simpsons
21:10	NBA Basketball
21:30	News in English
22:30	Feature film: "On Thin Ice"

PRAYER TIMES

04:59	Fajr
06:17	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:50	Dhuhr
14:35	'Asr
17:13	Maghrib
18:41	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church	Sweetish Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church	Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church	Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation	Tel. 637480
De la Salle Church	Tel. 661757
Terrazas Church	Tel. 622266

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625411

Anglican Church	Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church	Tel. 711331
Armenian Orthodox Church	Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church	Tel. 717151
Assyrian International Church	Tel. 627801, 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church	Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Tel. 823824 and 654932
Church of the Nazarene	Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy to cloudy with a possibility of scattered showers of rain. Winds will be westerly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with northerly moderate to fresh winds and choppy seas.

Amman	Min./max. temp. 4/19
Aqaba	7/18
Deserts	1/12
Jordan Valley	5/15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 9, Aqaba 18. Humidity readings:

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Amman 70 per cent. Aqaba 22 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Dr. Bahijal Badr	849362
Dr. Mohammad Sayma	606360
Dr. Adnan Zaghloul	898140
Dr. Hani Mansour	748368
First pharmacy	661912
Fordina pharmacy	718336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Natroukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salan pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Sametani pharmacy	637660

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Natroukh pharmacy	623672
Al Salan pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Sametani pharmacy	637660

Khalaf pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Inspector	630341
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	810228
Blood Bank	775122
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Prost Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	661767
Complaints	897465
Amman Municipality	767111
Complaints	767111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	721
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Amal Hospital	773111
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 636381

RJ Flight Information 06-3330

Light showers, warmer temperatures expected, meteorological official says

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan is to be affected by a weak low depression with light showers in the next 24 hours, according to a forecast by the Department of Meteorology Wednesday.

The department said that temperatures will rise in Amman to 9 degrees Celsius in the day and drop to 4 Celsius at night. The good news about a moderate weather condition was coupled Wednesday by a report by the director of agriculture in the south Jordan Valley which said that the vegetables in his area escaped undamaged by the storms of the past two months. Only a limited amount of vegetables grown under plastic sheets were affected by the frosty weather, Jamil Jaafreh said.

Mr. Jaafreh noted that part of the tomato crop was affected by the normal diseases and viruses affecting the crops in general.

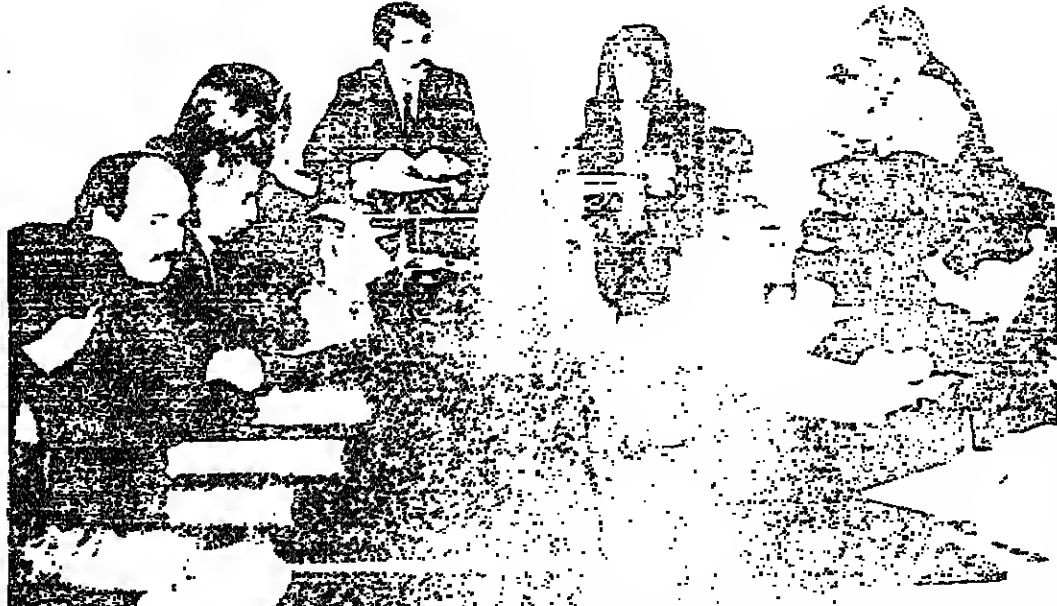
Farmers interviewed by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that they appreciated recent government decisions to offer farmers loans to help them carry on with their production.

Reports from Ramtha in the northern parts of Jordan, which was severely hit by the snowstorm, said the Armed Forces and the public works teams have now reopened all main roads and that the electricity supplies have been restored. The government hospital in Ramtha reported the treatment of 300 cases resulting from the storm.

District Governor Mohammad Amad said that the government had to give shelter to 18 bedouin families and 40 passengers travelling across the Ramtha border post to and from Syria. These stranded people were offered food, fuel and shelter, said the district governor.

Reports from Jerash spoke of landslides and the blockage of roads by boulders and rocks as a result of the storm. Joint teams from the public works and the Armed Forces are at work to reopen the roads, the reports said.

Reports from Maan said that the roads in the southern regions were still being cleared from snow Wednesday.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday visits the Jordan News Agency, Petra's office where she holds talks with its director, Ali Safadi, (centre) and staff about a fund-raising campaign that would assist the needy (Petra photo)

Princess Basma enlisting help of media in effort to assist needy in Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — For the second straight day, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma has continued a drive to raise funds to benefit the needy people in Jordan, enlisting the help of the local media in order to make the campaign a success.

The Princess called at the Jordan News Agency, Petra, and talked to its director, Ali Safadi, and staff about the need for generating a nationwide campaign to raise cash and in-kind contributions for the needy.

She said that the campaign, which is being organised for charity by the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF) in the coming holy month of Ramadan, is the second of its kind and will be a success like that of the past year thanks to the help of the local media.

The media is called on to underline the importance of solidarity among the members of the

Jordanian family through donations which will be distributed to the needy people with the help of various charitable organisations, the Princess noted.

This campaign is designed to encourage participation on the part of all citizens, who should cooperate in the face of the hardships and the difficult challenges confronting the Kingdom under present difficult economic circumstances and in view of the harsh winter season, said the Princess at the meeting.

The campaign, she added, is also designed to raise funds for QAF's programmes of rehabilitating the handicapped and the less fortunate members of society to enable them to become productive and useful citizens.

Mr. Safadi, for his part, voiced total support and pledged continued efforts through the agency to back the humanitarian campaign.

The Princess Tuesday visited Al Ra'i Arabic daily and met with its chief editor, Mahmoud Al Layed, to discuss the charity campaign. Mr. Layed, for his part, voiced readiness to support the campaign through the daily newspaper, saying the paper appreciated the national role Princess Basma was carrying out in her capacity as chairperson of QAF's board of trustees.

RSS, Yemen sign cooperation agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Higher Education in Yemen and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) in Jordan Wednesday concluded an agreement paving the way for cooperation in scientific and technological fields.

The agreement, signed by Dr. Ahmad Qadi, the Yemeni minister of higher education and scientific research, and RSS President Hani Al Mulki provides for exchanges of scientific information and expertise, training of researchers and technicians and organising seminars and conferences dealing with scientific topics.

The two sides will also cooperate in carrying out research programmes designed to help the exploration for natural resources in Yemen and Jordan.

In addition the two sides agreed to set up a joint committee to meet once a year in Amman or Sanaa alternately to follow up on the implementation of the agreement and to open up new avenues for bilateral cooperation, according to a statement after the signing of the agreement.

Dr. Qadi visited the RSS's various sections and was briefed by officials and specialists on the functions of the various units. Accompanied by a delegation from his ministry, Dr. Qadi listened to a briefing by Dr. Mulki about the RSS's activities and projects.

Dr. Mulki paid tribute to the strong ties between Yemen and Jordan and expressed hope that the two sides will conclude further agreements for scientific projects benefiting the Yemeni and Jordanian people.

JVA water problem: Too much water

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), which had been hoping for rain to fill the dams overlooking the Jordan Valley region so that sufficient irrigation water can be available for the dry season, is ironically releasing millions of cubic metres of surplus water from the dams.

The JVA has so far allowed some 60 million cubic metres of water to run down the River Jordan to the Dead Sea in order to strike a balance between the fast replenishment of the dams through the incoming flow and the dams' capacity, according to JVA Secretary General Abdul Aziz Washah.

Since the start of the rainy season, JVA, which is in charge of the water and the projects of the valley, has adopted a plan to achieve a balance between the incoming water from the rain and the total capacity of the dams in order to avoid any damage to the dams or the low lying agricultural farmlands, Dr. Wishah said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The total capacity of the dams overlooking the valley is 110 mil-

lion cubic metres and the dams became full early this winter thanks to the heavy rains and snow which fell, Dr. Wishah noted.

Dr. Wishah told Petra that the King Talal Dam, the largest in the Kingdom, now holds 75.8 million cubic metres out of a capacity of 81 million. After being filled to the brim, he said, a total of 42 million cubic metres were allowed to go in order to maintain the balance. Dr. Wishah said that during the rains and the snowstorms, water was rushing into the dam at the rate of 400 cubic metres a second while the JVA allowed 100 cubic metres a second to go, a balancing act which will continue until the end of February.

The JVA allowed the outgoing water to flow from the openings at the bottom of the lake, thus losing a lot of silt and other impurities which had been accumulating over the past years. Dr. Wishah added. He said the process has also reduced salinity in the reservoir's water to a minimum. The water quality is now

up to standards set by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), he said.

Referring to the other dams in the valley, Dr. Wishah said that Wadi Al Arab Dam is now full to capacity at 17 million cubic metres. The JVA has had to release some 800,000 cubic metres from that dam so far and the surplus water has run down the River Jordan.

Sharhabil Dam, which has a 5.8 million cubic metres capacity, is about 92 per cent full while the Wadi Shuib and Kafraim dams are full at 2.25 million and 3.5 million cubic metres of water, respectively. He said the total amount of extra water released by the two dams is around 12.7 million cubic metres.

Dr. Wishah said in a statement earlier that with proper management of the available water in the dams the country can have enough water for irrigation for an additional year. Jordan has been hit by severe water shortages since 1989 and the drought had cut farm production by some 30 per cent last year.

Parliament speakers voice support for Libyan people

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Libyan people's Congress met Wednesday with Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and discussed matters related to Arab affairs in general and the current threats levelled by Western nations against Libya in particular.

Mr. Lawzi stressed that Jordan was ready to contribute to efforts designed to fend off danger posed to the Arab nation. He said that Jordan's Parliament was ready to participate with other delegations from Arab parliaments in tours to various U.N. Security Council member countries to present the Libyan case in a bid to avert any aggression on the Arab country.

Mr. Lawzi said Jordan supports any peaceful means to settle the dispute between Libya and the U.S., Britain and France over the crash of French and American aircraft allegedly involving Libyan nationals.



Ahmad Al Lawzi

The U.S. and Britain have demanded that Libya agree to allow the extradition of two suspects allegedly involved in causing the crash of the two planes. A total of

270 passengers died when a Pan-Am airliner blew up over Lockerbie in Scotland in 1988.

Both Britain and the U.S. are issuing threats against Libya and U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle said Washington was serious about forcing Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to hand over the two Libyans to the U.S. and British authorities.

Mr. Lawzi said that Jordan was willing to participate in all peaceful endeavours within the framework of international law to settle the dispute.

The Libyan delegation Tuesday met Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Lati Arabiyat to discuss the same topic. Dr. Arabiyat told the delegation, which is now touring Arab countries, that Jordan was behind the Libyan government and people and is in solidarity with all Arab countries in the face of foreign threats and dangers.



Cartoons such as this one which appeared in the American and Canadian press will be on display at the Royal Cultural Centre

Exhibition to depict American understanding of intifada through cartoons in press

AMMAN (J.T.) — "The Uprising in Cartoons" is the title of an exhibition to be opened at the Royal Cultural Centre Saturday depicting a collection of cartoonists' work in the American and Canadian press in 1987 and 1988.

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) is organising the exhibition which is to be opened by Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif, according to an ADC announcement. It said that the exhibition will display enlarged cartoons drawn by various artists featuring the uprising, or intifada, its drive to evict the Israeli occupiers and the political implications of various factors affecting it.

In the past year, the Palestinian intifada has succeeded in attracting cartoonists based in North America as it did in reflecting a positive picture about the Palesti-

nian cause, said the ADC statement.

This deep and important shift in American views about the Palestinian personality and the just rights of the Palestinian people is of paramount importance since such positive transformation in people's thinking could usher in a shift towards a better American understanding of the reality and the facts of the Middle East conflict, said the statement.

Charles Press, the American writer, had said that a political cartoon is an open invitation for a political campaign in support of a just cause, the ADC statement added. It said that the ADC has collected the cartoons published in the American and Canadian press about the Palestinian cause in a book entitled "The Uprising in Cartoons" which is being displayed in enlarged form at the RCC exhibition until Feb. 21.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Kabariti to visit Egypt

AMMAN (J.T.) — Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti will leave Amman for Cairo next Monday at an invitation from his Egyptian counterpart. Mr. Kabariti is expected to meet during his three-day visit to Cairo Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa for a discussion on bilateral relations.

Department reports higher revenues

AMMAN (Petra) — The revenues of the Income Tax Department in January 1992 reached JD 44,187,285 compared to JD 23,555,817 in the same month last year, department sources said Wednesday. The sources said the department expected to collect in January JD 26,215,872, which when compared to the collected amount reflects a 68.5 per cent rise.

Parliament to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament will hold a meeting Saturday under the chairmanship of House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and in the presence of Cabinet members. The House will discuss several laws referred to it by the Lower House. The Lower House will meet Sunday afternoon under the chairmanship of its Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat and in the presence of several ministers.

436 projects licensed in 1991

AMMAN (Petra) — Some 436 new industrial projects with a total capital of JD 68,701,000 were licensed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in 1991. In 1990, a total of 486 projects with a total capital of JD 64.2 million were licensed by the ministry. The projects were distributed over 14 industrial sectors ranging from food supplies manufacturing industries, engineering industries, clothes manufacturing, packing, construction, plastic manufacturing, agricultural processing and others.

Bush

(Continued from page 1)

ahead of Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, the former front-runner whose campaign has been hurt by allegations that he had an extramarital affair and evaded the military draft during the Vietnam war.

The USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll showed Mr. Tsongas with 37 per cent to Mr. Clinton's 22 per cent. Among the other three candidates, Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey had 12 per cent, Iowa Senator Tom Harkin had 11 per cent and former California Governor Jerry Brown was at seven per cent.

Mr. Bush made it clear his campaign would stress the successes that sent his popularity into the 90-per-cent range last March: the end of the cold war and communism and, most importantly, the U.S. strength that helped America lead the allied victory over Iraq in the Gulf war.

"America stands alone as the undisputed leader of the world," Mr. Bush said to cheers of "four more years."

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Exhibition of drawings by the French school's kindergarten children at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of oil and water colour paintings by Tete Wegelius, Lucy Mario, Hada Bitar and Jennifer Bowker at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Spanish artist Snad Esheiri at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Shaker Hassan Al Said at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- ★ Exhibition of photographs on Goethe-Forest, between Tullish and Shobak, at the Jordan University for Women.

THEATRE

- ★ Arabic play entitled "Who's There?" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

SYMPOSIUM

- ★ Symposium entitled "development of Legislation and Technology Transfer and its Employment in Modern Laws" at the University of Jordan (3-6 p.m.).

LECTURES

- ★ Lecture on languages used in Spain by Prof. Juan Antonio de Yarmouk University at the Spanish Cultural Centre — 5 p.m.
- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, by artist Shaker Hassan Al Said on his works at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 6 p.m.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Steps on water: dams on the way

THE GOVERNMENT has acted affirmatively and swiftly in dealing with the consequences of the recent snowstorms and rainfalls. Three major decisions were taken by the Cabinet Tuesday in a bid to repair damages that ensued from the severe weather conditions that prevailed in the country in the past week. Of the three resolutions adopted by the government, the third one attracts most of the attention.

After deciding to hasten the establishment of the long overdue agricultural insurance fund, the government ordered the preparation of the necessary studies with the purpose of constructing additional dams in the Kingdom.

This is where one can take issue with the Cabinet: Does the country still need additional reports and viability studies before it makes a conclusion in favour of building new dams? The figures which are familiar to most people tell a different story and point decisively in support of a decision to construct more dams in Jordan without awaiting more examination. The salient figures available to this paper on the subject of water and dams are as follows: Our existing dams can collect only 110 million cubic metres of rainfall annually. We say only 110 million cubic metres because the average annual rainfall is about six billion cubic metres.

This year alone, four billion cubic metres of rain have fallen till this point in time. By the end of the season, no doubt, more rain will fall. Out of this amount of rain, 450 million cubic metres had streamed uselessly, some of it all the way to the Dead Sea. In the face of such information, does the government need additional studies before it makes the inevitable decision to construct more dams to harness and collect the wasted rainfall year in and year out?

Against the backdrop that the water issue in the Middle East region is mushrooming into a potential source of conflict would it not be wiser and more prudent for us to become self-reliant on local water resources in order to free the country from whatever constraints the multilateral peace talks on water might impose on us? Besides, the kind of dams that we are suggesting are the cost-effective ones that entail relatively little expenditure. And needless to say, if a greater portion of the rainfall in the Kingdom is collected and reserved, the underground water resources stand to be replenished — an improvement that would naturally augment the agricultural production of the country and diversify its yields.

It is no fault of the government that not much had been done in this vein till now. For all intents and purposes, Sharif Zaid Ben Shaker's government has inherited the shortcomings and omissions of many former governments. But it now stands in the unique position of appreciating the problem more than the previous cabinets and is now in a position to undertake what the others had failed to do.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Wednesday described an airlift of western food aid to the people of the former Soviet Union as a form of charity designed to humiliate the Soviet people and to subjugate them to Western will. The paper said that following the World War II, during which the Soviet Union was an ally of the West, London, Paris, and Washington carried out a campaign designed to dismantle the Soviet republics until they achieved their goal. The goal was achieved through the help of a traitor who opened the door wide for Washington's conspiracies and helped to see the Soviet Union, the superpower collapse, the paper said. Now the Western countries airlift to feed 270 million people of the former Soviet Union is considered as an unprecedented humiliation in world history, coming at a time when the Americans are trying to consolidate what they call the new world order, under which the Western supremacy should be recognised by the whole world, the paper continued. Had the Western countries left the Soviet people to fend for themselves under their own system, nothing of this kind would have ever happened, and no humiliation of the Russian people would have occurred, said the paper. It is no charity in good faith one that takes place at a time when millions of people in the U.S. and other Western nations are homeless and begging their food, said the paper. The Western leaders are bent on carrying out the airlift in a bid to subjugate the Soviet Nation and not out of a feeling of sympathy for the starving people, it said. Leaders who continue the process of starving the Iraqi women and children, the paper said, can by no means be conducting a humanitarian gesture with the airlift of food supplies to a nation which they had helped to destroy.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily called on the government to increase the prices of fuel consumed in Jordan and to stop subsidising fuel prices. Fahd Al Fanek said that while a litre of Diesel oil sells for 75 fils, its real cost is 125 fils and the main beneficiary of the subsidy are the transit trucks which operate between Jordan and neighbouring Arab countries including non-Jordanian trucks. Only 10 per cent of the Diesel oil sold by the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company is used for heating homes which means that the rest benefits the transit trucks, said the writer. Fanek said that the poor benefit the least from this subsidy and therefore the government should increase the price of fuel in the course of implementing the economic restructuring programme. Saving millions of dinars which now benefit sectors not in need of assistance is a must, and the saved money can help the government make more allocations for other basic services like health and education benefiting the poor people the writer added. He expressed the view that unless this drastic step is taken by the government, the Kingdom will not be able to honour its commitments regarding the settlement of its foreign debts.

By Tom Heneghan
Reuters

BONN — With the Soviet Union gone, Islamic fundamentalists seem to be replacing the communists as the group NATO states see threatening them the most.

Warnings of a growing threat from Muslim countries along the southern flank of the Atlantic alliance echoed through speeches at a recent high-level defence conference in Munich.

Western generals, politicians or academics at the Munich conference on security policy last weekend were careful not to pick an ideological fight over Islam, a contrast to the East-West propaganda duels at the height of the cold war.

But they were clearly concerned that states like Libya, Iran, Iraq or Pakistan could buy up some of the old superpower's nuclear equipment and experts to build an "Islam bomb."

Muslim fundamentalists are traditionally suspicious of the West although many of them favour its market economy. They were tolerated by some pro-western Third World governments during cold war years to counter the influence of leftists.

While not necessarily sym-

Will Muslim fundamentalists replace communists as NATO's enemy?

pathetic towards Iraq, they were incensed by the resolve of the west to strip Iraq of its nuclear programme materials while leaving Israel's intact.

The Jewish state, widely believed to have developed nuclear

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arms, is seen by fundamentalists as Islam's number one enemy.

Long fixed only on the now-vanished Warsaw Pact, the debate in Munich ranged over concerns like Iraq-style "ecological terrorism" and a "population bomb" in North Africa, the race for influence among Central Asian Muslims and Chinese rockets in the Middle East.

"We must be careful not to build up Islamic fundamentalism into the new enemy," Norbert Gansel, foreign policy spokesman for Germany's opposition Social Democrats, warned in a rare dissenting comment.

Willy Wimmer, a senior Bonn Defence Ministry official, also urged caution and charged the West had reacted as nervously to Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) as it did to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 nuclear missiles in the 1980s.

Defence Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg set the tone in his opening remarks by reviving terms that sprang up after the oil price hike and Iran's Islamic revolution 1979.

"A multitude of problems are combining into potential crises and conflicts in regions crucial to Europe," he said.

"Especially in the Islamic arc of tension stretching from Pakistan to Algeria, there is a zone of

potential upheavals that reach into the direct vicinity of Europe."

Referring to his recent talks with French Defence Minister Pierre Joxe and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak — both men concerned about security in the Mediterranean region — he said:

"There are risks that could seriously affect us. I would not exclude that an oil embargo could again become an option."

Pierre Lellouche, reflecting France's concern at the unrest caused by the ban on the FIS in Algeria, said the greatest threat to NATO was now explosive population growth in Muslim states close to acquiring their own nuclear arms.

"Algeria and Pakistan are at the doorstep of the West," said the adviser to conservative leader Jacques Chirac.

Stressing even moderate Mus-

lims could present problems, Britain's chief of defence staff, Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent, noted that Riyadh's rockets could be a threat if they were moved West along the North African coast.

"Saudi Arabia has Chinese-made weapons that, if moved along a littoral, could hit London or here tomorrow," he said.

NATO member Turkey, long the group's outsider because of its Muslim traditions and human rights abuses, found itself wooed by western leaders hoping Ankara can spread its secular outlook to Turkic-speaking republics of Central Asia.

"Our ally Turkey will play a decisive role in the future orientation of the Islamic republics in the south of the former Soviet Union," NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner declared.

"That may tip the balance in the whole Islamic World."

Mesut Yilmaz, chairman of Turkey's Motherland Party, helped redirect attention from East-West to North-South issues.

"The southern flank is not shielded from the effects of tension and uncertainty like the central zone was," he told the conference. "Turkey stands at the centre of this region of turmoil and can contribute to peace in the area."



In world economy, 'made in America' has less meaning

By Stefan Fatsis and
Bart Ziegler
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — What's an American product?

Is it a TV made by U.S.-based Zenith at a Mexican plant? A General Motors car assembled at a California factory half owned by Toyota? A polo shirt sewn in Honduras from cloth cut in the United States?

To truly be American, U.S. citizens can't drive a Chevrolet Lumina Sedan (assembled in Canada), eat at Burger King (owned by a British company) or buy groceries at the A and P supermarket (German-controlled).

They shouldn't think of munching a Nestle's crunch bar (Swiss) while watching a Columbia Pictures movie (Japanese) at a cineplex Odeon Theatre (Canadian).

Identical products on a store shelf may be imported or domestic depending on when they were ordered. Seemingly American brands often are foreign-owned. And foreign brands can be made in the United States.

In fact, many economists, trade experts, manufacturers and business people believe that in a world of international trade and multinational corporations, increasingly there's no such thing as an "American" product.

They also say the question misses the point. What matters today is where goods are made, the type of jobs they provide, the benefit to communities and the advantages for consumers, not whose flag flies over corporate headquarters.

"Almost any one product weighing more than 4.5 kilograms and costing more than \$10 these days is a global composite, combining parts or services from many different nations," said Robert B. Reich, a Harvard political economist.

"Decades ago, 'Made in America' meant something," he said. "Today it's more deceptive than helpful."

A frenzy over American-made goods has erupted in the weeks since President Bush's acrimonious trade mission to Japan. With impassioned rhetoric and anti-Japan commentary, the debate reflects a worried nation

locked in an election-year recession.

Members of Congress have backed legislation to protect the U.S. auto industry. Business groups have aired "pro-American" ads. Companies have offered incentives to employees to buy American cars. Cities and towns have cancelled orders to Japan.

"We're losing our shirts in this country. We're losing our dresses too," begins a television ad by the Crafted With Pride in the U.S.A. Council, a textile industry marketing group.

The ad shows seemingly endless line of people snaking across a countryside to a city unemployment office, implying 500,000 U.S. textile jobs have been lost to foreign countries in the last decade.

"The worst part is we're doing this to ourselves," the voice-over says. "Because we're buying so many imports. The time to look out for ourselves is now. Buy American, and we won't have to throw in the towel."

Some of the hysteria has backfired. Town leaders of Greece,

N.Y., discovered that a Komatsu Ltd. excavating machine they rejected was made in the United States and a John Deere Co. model they chose instead used an engine from Japan.

So which is more American? A Chrysler Eagle Summit made at Mitsubishi's Diamond-Star Motors Plant in Normal, Ill., containing 52 per cent U.S. parts, or a Toyota Camry made in Georgetown, Ky., with 74 per cent American parts?

And what constitutes an "American" part anyway? The question can be carried to almost ridiculous extremes. Is it where the ore was mined? Where the steel was forged? Where the part was molded?

For all their bellyaching about Japan, the big three U.S. automakers often fail to note that Ford owns 24 per cent of Mazda, GM owns 38 per cent of Isuzu and Chrysler owns 11 per cent of Mitsubishi Motors. Ford owns Jaguar outright, GM owns Lotus, Chrysler owns Lamborghini.

And the big three continue to import parts and raw materials such as steel from Japan (though

Chrysler has said it will end all steel imports by 1994).

It is not abnormal for an automobile assembled in America to contain parts from the United States, Japan, Korea and Mexico. GM's Chevrolet division — the "heartbeats of America" — imports most of its geo line. Ford makes Mercury Tracers in Mexico. Chrysler's Dodge Colts are made in Japan.

In addition to tens of thousands of jobs, foreign automakers have provided revenues that have invigorated towns.

Toyota is paying Georgetown, Ky., more than 1 million annually for 20 years in lieu of taxes. Nissan, whose 4-year-old Smyrna, Tenn., plant employs 4,300 people, paid the town \$1.25 million last year — about 20 per cent of its budget.

Many economists say that creating jobs in America — regardless of who creates them — improves the economy.

"Location means jobs, which means standard of living," said Howard Roese, an economist at the Institute for International Economics in Washington.

But foreign-owned plants do have drawbacks.

American unions, for one, have lost some power as traditionally non-union Japanese auto companies have opened plants. U.S. automakers have lost market share to the stiffer competition.

Foreign companies also can gain a stranglehold on an industry, such as Japan's near-monopoly in making flat screens for portable computers, said Laura D'Andrea Tyson, a trade expert at the University of California at Berkeley. Companies enjoying such dominance could control supply and price, she said.

And since most Americans don't own stock in foreign companies, they don't earn dividends or other shareholder benefits from foreign-owned plants.

U.S. manufacturing jobs have been disappearing for decades, from 34 per cent of the total employment force in 1950 to 17 per cent in 1990, federal statistics show. The job losses — including 1 million in the last two years — partly reflect cheaper labour costs overseas.

Choice of Hong Kong governor as tough as job itself

By Sue Baker
Reuters

LONDON — Choosing Britain's next, and probably last, governor of Hong Kong could prove almost as difficult as the task of running the colony until it is handed back to China in 1997.

In a delicate balancing act, the British government will have to weigh its own policy imperatives with the wishes of Hong Kong's six million people and, privately at least, Peking's political sensitivities in making the decision later this year.

The same balancing act applies to the job itself, to fall vacant when Sir David Wilson retires later this year.

"The new governor has to be able to get on with China but on the other hand he has to tell Peking that human rights issues are of legitimate concern to people in Hong Kong," said Peter Ferdinand of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

"He has to generate income for projects, assure the world that the economy is going to continue improving... be able to face any potential crises in Hong Kong... and also establish good working relations with the British government."

"Obviously all that is going to make it a very difficult diplomatic tightrope to walk," Mr. Ferdinand, head of the institute's Asia-Pacific Programme, said in an interview.

Since Britain announced on new year's eve that Sir David, governor since 1987, would retire this year, there has been a flurry of media speculation about who will become Hong Kong's 28th and probably last governor before the Union Jack is lowered at midnight on June 30, 1997.

The choice will fall to whoever emerges as prime minister after a British general election expected in April or May.

Prominent among those touted

in Conservative circles are Sir Geoffrey Howe, architect of the 1984 treaty setting out the terms for Hong Kong's handover to Peking. He was Britain's longest-serving foreign minister since World War I.

Gulf war commander General Sir Peter de la Billiere, Defence Secretary Tom King and Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Brooke have also been mentioned as have Sir Charles Powell, Margaret Thatcher's former foreign policy adviser, and David Owen, who founded the now defunct Social Democratic Party (SDP).

If the Opposition Labour Party manages to overturn three terms of Conservative rule to win the election, Eric Varley, a former industry secretary, might be favourite for the job with Ted Rowlands, a former Foreign Office minister, a close second.

But there appears little chance that the preference of many Hong Kong Chinese for a local candidate to win the colony's top job would be seriously considered because of Chinese opposition.

"Whoever it is will have a very tough time and whoever it is Hong Kong will not trust him or her... unless it were a Hong Kong person," local legislator Henry Tang said in a recent interview in London.

"Whoever comes... must be able to represent Hong Kong's interests... not just to Britain but also to Peking."

Analysts said Britain's policy of accommodating China undermines the governor's credibility with Hong Kong's people, who want a firm line against Peking. China, meanwhile, regards the governor as an underling of the British government and demands direct contact with London on important issues.

There is also a preference among some Hong Kong legislators for a diplomat rather than a politician to replace Sir David.

But few spring to mind. John Boyd, chief clerk at the Foreign Office, was described by one newspaper as a possible choice. But there is word he may soon accept an ambassadorship.

Nigeria sees bright future for oil industry despite threats

By John Owen-Davies
Reuters

LAGOS — Nigeria sees a bright future for its oil industry despite threats to the economic lifeline as the country's military rulers prepare to restore civilian rule.

Oil has been a double-edged sword for Africa's most populous country since production began in 1956 — providing wealth for development but bringing in its wake rampant corruption that led to the downfall of the last era of civil rule in an army coup.

"The future is very bright and I believe Nigeria will be in oil for at least another 25 to 30 years and in gas for much longer," Petroleum Minister Jibril Amisu told Reuters.

"We need to have a strategic vision over oil, both in terms of the investment we need to make and in terms of our own attitude to oil as a source of cash and energy," he said.

Oil accounts for nearly 90 per cent of the sprawling West African country's foreign currency earnings, despite repeated attempts to expand non-oil exports.

Nigeria, weighed down by a \$33-billion foreign debt, rising inflation and high unemployment, has been a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) since 1971.

Amisu's view of the future, backed by foreign joint venture partners, is tinged with caution as Nigerian workers flex their muscles and local communities seek bigger slices of oil wealth.

"It is a threat but it can be overcome," said Mr. Amisu.

"There must be peace in the oilfields, there must be security in the oilfields, there must be harmony, understanding and good-will between the companies and communities," he added.

Another problem is planned government cuts in subsidies on local petrol prices, as sought by

the World Bank, in a country where the minimum daily wage will not buy a loaf of bread.

"At the moment the subsidy remains but we are trying hard to get our people to understand that there is some subsidy and try to understand the meaning of oil," Mr. Amisu said.

Labour leaders, who on January 29 postponed a threatened strike by up to 30,000 contract oil workers seeking permanent status, have said increasing petrol prices from the equivalent of seven U.S. cents a litre could trigger widespread unrest.

"The subsidy issue is explosive. Any big unrest in coming months could see the military staying in power," a former senior military officer, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

Military President Ibrahim Babangida, who seized power in a 1985 palace coup after General Muhammad Buhari ousted the 1979-83 civilian government, has said he plans to hand over to civilians after presidential elections in December.

Encouraged by future prospects in the oil industry, local arms of companies such as Mobil, Chevron, ELF and Shell plan to increase investments in minority-stake ventures with state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

This is in line with Nigeria's goal to increase output capacity to 2.5 million barrels per day (BPD) from just over 1.9 million BPD by 1995 and, in the same time, boost recoverable reserves to 20 billion barrels from around 18.4 billion now.

As an incentive, Nigeria's last year signed an accord with venture partners increasing their profit margins. It replaced one signed in 1986.

"I think the prospects are good. To go from 1.9 million BPD to 2.5 million, there are sufficient reserves to do it," Alfred Koch, chairman of Mobil

producing Nigeria, told Reuters.

"Twenty billion is a very easy target. You can easily expect between 15 and 20 billion in new reserves and, as we see it, 90 per cent will be offshore in the (Niger) delta area," he added.

Almost all of Nigeria's oil and gas is being exploited in and off the swampy, isolated southeastern delta area. Onshore searches have started in the northeast near Lake Chad.

"The Niger delta is about 50 per cent explored, compared with, say, the Gulf of Mexico," Don Mahura, managing director of Chevron Nigeria Ltd., told Reuters.

"I don't think you will find the big fields any more. Even with smaller funds, they are attractive because they are within existing facilities," he said.

ELF Nigeria Ltd said its venture with NNPC planned to invest \$1.7 billion to help develop offshore oilfields and double its output to about 190,000 BPD by the year 2000.

Shell, ELF and Italy's AGIP are taking part with NNPC in a long-delayed four billion dollar project to produce liquefied natural gas mainly for markets in Europe and the United States.

Industry sources say the project, in which NNPC has a 60 per cent stake, is likely to start deliveries early in 1997 if financing is in place by the end of this year.

Shell, Chevron and Mobil suffered last year from violence by disgruntled local communities and workers in delta areas.

Shell, Nigeria's largest joint venture producer with around one million BPD, briefly lost at least 67,000 BPD in a civil unrest in its foras field where a rig was set ablaze.

The companies have boosted security and stepped up help for communities agitating for more than a decade for more official compensation for pollution and other effects of exploration.



Prime rates drop to 9.5%

(Continued from page 1)

an arms deal with France was cancelled. He estimated that servicing this debt amounted to \$750 million each year, a figure he described as having "a severe negative impact on the country."

The governor said the Kingdom would try to obtain the most possible concessions in terms of interest and other commissions from the creditors to ease the tremendous financial burden the debt servicing entails.

The CBJ chief elaborated by categorising \$5.5 billion as being owed to the Paris Club of creditor governments.

He stressed that Jordan never ceased repaying its debts even during the Gulf crisis and said that \$600 million in principal and interest were repaid in 1991 to settle various commercial debts and other obligations to commercial banks.

Dr. Nabulsi defended the IMF adjustment programme for Jordan and noted that it was very well studied and judged by all parties as convenient to achieve financial and economic stability in the Kingdom and to keep the Jordanian currency stable in the near-term and even in the medium-term (5-10 years).

He said that under the programme the government would reduce expenditures and subsidies as much as possible but under no circumstances would the government squeeze the poorer sector of the society.

Dr. Nabulsi expected remittances to drop substantially this year to \$600 million after reaching nearly \$1.5 billion in 1991 due mainly to the transfer of total savings of returns from the Gulf. He expected also receiving \$400 million in foreign aid in 1992.

The governor put Jordan's liquid reserves at the CBJ at \$750-\$800 million and said the amount was very adequate to meet three months of imports as internationally recognised.

Dr. Nabulsi reviewed the banking sector in Jordan and said that there was a need to merge banks through raising their capital requirements and to restructure the system on more solid grounds.

He referred to various legislations that are now under consideration at various levels and said that the legislation concerning moneychanging would be ready this week and Jordanians can expect to deal with moneychangers again sometime in April at the latest.

Dr. Nabulsi said that Al Mashrek Bank would be merged with Jordan-Gulf Bank or any other bank in the coming few months and that Jordan-Gulf Bank would also be bought by a new financial company.

Dr. Nabulsi concluded by saying that the government would very soon be launching a new development plan after having achieved the required stability, financially and economically, through the IMF programme.

By Thomas J. Fitzpatrick

There is an office at the Vatican in Rome whose mission it is to suggest intentions for members of the Catholic Church to pray about, and to stimulate response to these intentions. This office is called "the apostleship of prayer." For the month of February the intention is: "Mutual understanding through Christian-Muslim exchange of ideas." The intention that is especially proposed then for prayer of Catholics during this month is that there will be an increase in mutual understanding between Muslims and Christians and this would lead to or be part of an exchange of ideas. This is a very important intention for us all to remember in our prayers.

The history of Christian-Muslim dialogue has not been a straight road strewn with flowers. Dialogue amongst us all has been made difficult by wars in which we have killed one another. And we have claimed that our wars have been for the sake of truth!

There are some attitudes which need to be corrected if dialogue between Muslims and Christians can fruitfully take place. First, it is a mistake on the part of the people of the Middle East to equate the West with Christianity. Although historically the West is a development of some attitudes in Christianity (though we must be very careful here), much of the West today is characterised by principles which are not compatible with Christianity. Secondly, there is an attitude in the West that labels Arabs as fanatics, absolutists and even terrorists.

This comes from ignorance, but we must note that the news headlines in the West about the Middle East for decades have been about fanatics, absolutists and terrorists.

These are prejudices which characterise attitudes of Westerners towards the Middle East and Middle Easterners towards the West. But these global attitudes also find expression in the ordinary life of different groups in the Middle East. So, I have found that some Arab Christians do not see their home here because they are Christians and Christianity is at home somewhere else — presumably in the West. And then there are some Muslims I have met who would not pay any attention to me because I am a Christian from the West. The larger prejudices and the smaller ones touch one another.

The larger, global issues of tolerance and the smaller, everyday issues have to be treated simultaneously if we are to reach a world where human beings live in peace and mutual respect. There is no future where there is no tolerance.

The issues here of tolerance and dialogue, are not simple issues and have been treated at length by many authors. On the occasion of the Catholic church's urging us to pray for understanding and respect, I indicate here some thoughts which have been helpful for me since I have been in the Middle East, in thinking about dialogue, respect and tolerance:

— We are all human beings, whether we are Buddhists, Muslims or Christians. As human beings we have com-

mon experiences; we have to go to bed at night; we have to eat; we have to watch our health; we all suffer common griefs. At the loss of a child or a parent we are all in pain. It is through this common bond of suffering that we have a chance of realising our equality. The great religions of the world are all helps for us in dealing with suffering. Why cannot we listen to one another in our pain? Sensitivity to shared pain could help break down the barriers of prejudices.

Science and technology have spread around the world at a very great speed. Although the roots of modern science and technology may be in the West, rather than to speak of science as a Western product it is more realistic for us today to speak of science and technology as a development of the people of the world. Scientific thinking has been and is a challenge to all world religions. For example, Christianity has struggled for centuries with those in the West who have tried to use science to disprove religion. I stress that no religion is without its challenge in trying to integrate science within it in the modern world. In this area we can be of help to one another. This kind of cooperation and communication is very important for the practical development of the world and for the deepening of religious be-

liefs. Some think that taking on the ideology behind science is to lose one's religion, that religions and science are mutually exclusive; this is not necessary. But there is much discussion needed for a healthy relationship between the different scientific disciplines and religion.

I have been in the Middle East for five years now. I would like to indicate here a development for myself which I think has been a very productive way for me to advance in understanding and acceptance. I have been brought up in a Western environment and dealt in my education with the problems that were current in that culture when I was being educated. At fifty, after a European doctorate in theology and over ten years of university life in the United States, I arrived in Jerusalem, where I studied Arabic for two years (at the beginning of the intifada), and for the last

three years I have been working at the Jesuit Centre in Amman. All my education and experience did not prepare me for work here. To work here I have had to give up much of what I learned and thought religiously in the past. I have had to discern what was important and what was unimportant. I have in a very healthy way had to go very deep in learning the essentials of my faith and let go many "beliefs" shaped by my local upbringing.

This experience I offer as an example perhaps necessary for many of us if we are to advance in dialogue. I suggest there are many "beliefs" that we hold on to, which are not basics of our faith and prevent us from seeing the good and truth in others. For example, as a priest, I listen to many people about God, and I suggest that there is an image of God expressed by some Christians which is false: God as one who is merely waiting to pounce upon us because of our sins, or

God who is a God to be excessively feared.

Arc we free enough before our God to let go of those religious beliefs and rules which are not essential and, in fact, may be destructive and help only to separate us? If we are able to delve more deeply into our faith, the world ahead of us will be a much better place.

Human rights have been much talked about in this century. The freedom of religious belief is certainly one of the most important human rights. But in working out the religious rights of ourselves and others we have to work together. We have much to offer one another. In living in the Middle East I have come to realise that my Christian religious faith can only be enhanced by living with and listening to my Muslim brothers and sisters. I would like to think that this belief is mutual. The Catholic Church is proposing that the church pray in the month of February for understanding among Christians and Muslims. This is a worthy intention in prayer for all in the Middle East.

Shooting breaks out in Algiers

(Continued from page 1)

hundred yards from the U.S. embassy. Witnesses said they were arrested but the others escaped. There was no official comment.

Gunmen shot dead six policemen in Algiers just hours after the state of emergency was declared. Two others died in attacks in Bordj Menaïel, 80 kilometres to the east.

The weekly L'Hebdo Libre asked how long the army would continue to "watch over a people, half of whom do not know what they want."

It said: "With or without the FIS, the fundamentalists already exist and will go to the end of their suicidal logic whatever the means they use to achieve that."

The weekly's director Abdelrahmane Mahmoud said: "The day the army has had enough in providing the barrier of protection for people who do not have the courage to protect themselves, that day will be certainly too late for a proper solution to be found to a real problem. It will

be quite simply civil war."

The government is working on a programme to try to eradicate poverty, particularly among Algeria's youth.

In an interview published on Wednesday the minister responsible for trade, Ahmad Fodil Bey, said 36 billion dinars (\$1.6 billion) would be spent on helping Algeria's 14 or 15 million poor. This would be divided equally between direct payments to low-income families and maintaining subsidies on flour, milk and bread.

Two billion dollars would be spent on basic food imports, up by 400 million from last year, he said.

The Socialist Forces Front (FFS) called Algerians to mobilise to guarantee liberties under the state of emergency declared on Sunday night.

It said it had been prevented from holding a two-day meeting to discuss democracy and Algeria's political problems.

The FFS won 25 seats in the first round of the now-cancelled poll, second to the FIS which took 188 of 231 won outright.

Akawi killed by torture

(Continued from page 1)

complained of having been struck and not feeling well. He was examined twice. The second time a doctor tried to resuscitate him but to no avail and Akawi died, the Shin Bet chief said.

Dr. Baden said he had interviewed Israeli interrogators who admitted keeping the prisoner in a tiny freezing corridor for hours, hooded and handcuffed.

Human rights groups charge Palestinian prisoners are routinely tortured by Shin Bet agents who make use of a 1987 Israeli commission of inquiry report

enabling them to use "moderate physical pressure."

Amnesty International said on Wednesday it had written to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to ask for an independent investigation into Akawi's death.

The London-based human rights group said Akawi died on Feb. 4 after ill-treatment in the West Bank's Hebron prison.

Autopsy reports showed "Akawi's death was caused by a heart attack, triggered by emotional and physical pressure," said Amnesty, adding extreme cold and medical negligence had contributed to his death.

Likud takes immigrants on settlement tour

(Continued from page 1)

in the territories occupied from the Arabs in the 1967 Middle East war.

Mr. Amidor contended the tours adhered to Israel's pledge regarding the territories. "The understanding with the U.S. speaks of not settling the immigrants beyond the green line," he told Reuters. "The immigrants are being shown the settlements — that is all. They are not being settled there."

Mr. Amidor said the tours are headed by Yisrael Katz, a former aide to hardline Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, architect of a building boom in the territories.

Galilee Arabs squeezed
Meanwhile, Israeli Arab lead-

ers accused the government Wednesday of omitting them from a massive development plan for the Galilee and called the plan a "death sentence for our villages."

They told a news conference that Israel planned to move about 400,000 Jews onto a strip of land that borders the occupied West Bank and is home to about 185,000 Palestinian citizens of Israel.

The plan, announced by Housing Minister Ariel Sharon a year ago, would build up to 20 Jewish settlements and 28,000 housing units along the green line, the boundary between Israel and the West Bank.

Mr. Sharon's spokesman, Shaya Segal, had no immediate comment on the allegations.

The development plan for the

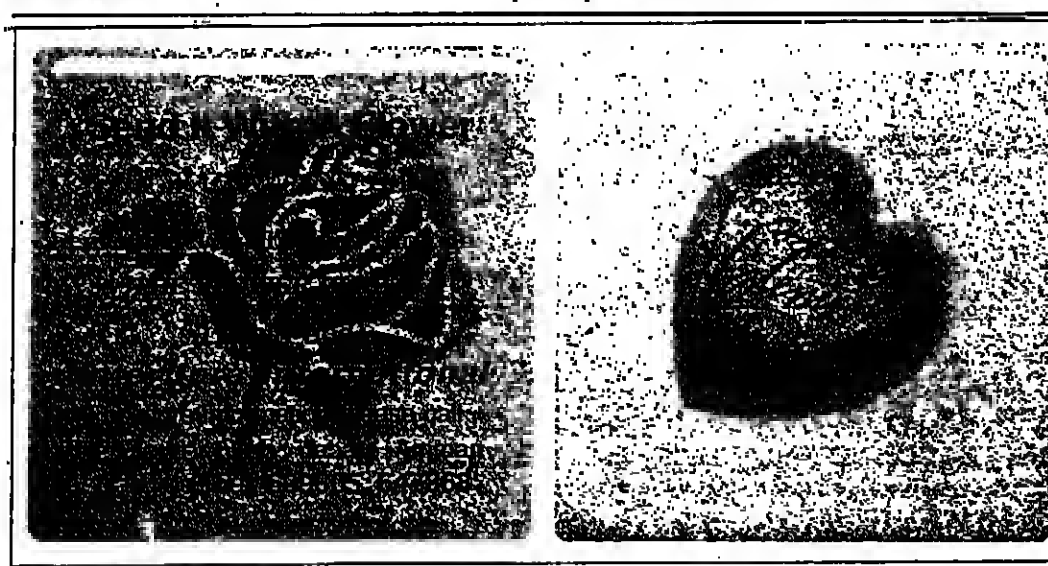
Galilee in northern Palestine is part of Israel's effort to absorb the Soviet Jews.

"We are not willing to be victims of the immigration," said Sheikh Ibrahim Sarsur, the village council head in Kfar Qassem.

Sheikh Sarsur said Mr. Sharon's plan offered no development schemes for his village of 18,000 next to the West Bank.

Kfar Qassem, he said, has been forced to give up about 1,000 acres to Jewish builders in the last 40 years, and the latest plan called for confiscating 550 dunams from two neighbouring villages for roads and homes.

"This plan is a death sentence for our villages. It kills the future for our coming generations," Sheikh Sarsur said, speaking in Hebrew.



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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 11.2.1992	Tel Aviv Close 12.2.1992
Sterling Pound	1.7990	1.7912
Deutsche Mark	1.5956	1.5920
Swiss Franc	1.4570	1.4585
French Franc	5.4350	5.4333
Japanese Yen	127.45	127.05
European Currency Unit	1.7600	1.7607

150 Per STD
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. 13/92

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 12.2.1992

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.94	5.94	5.95	4.31
Sterling Pound	10.37	10.16	10.06	10.00
Deutsche Mark	9.50	9.50	9.43	9.25
Swiss Franc	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.06
French Franc	10.00	10.00	9.95	9.68
Japanese Yen	5.50	5.43	5.00	4.67
European Currency Unit	10.21	10.25	10.12	9.94

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollar 1,000,000 or equivalent

Precious Metals Date: 12.2.1992

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	356.45	6.75	Silver	4.19	.090

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 12.2.1992

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6710	0.6790
Sterling Pound	1.2154	1.2245
Deutsche Mark	0.4243	0.4264
Swiss Franc	0.4741	0.4765
French Franc	0.1246	0.1252
Japanese Yen	0.5327	0.5354
Dutch Guilder	0.5749	0.5768
Swedish Krona	0.1167	0.1173
Italian Lira	0.0564	0.0567
Belgian Franc	0.02065	0.02078

Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 12.2.1992

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7640	1.7750
Lebanese Lira	0.0768	0.0776
Saudi Riyal	0.1602	0.1615
Kuwaiti Dinar
Qatari Riyal	0.1634	0.1644
Egyptian Pound	0.2020	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7330	1.7420
UAE Dirham	0.1634	0.1644
Greek Drachma	0.03650	0.3730
Cypriot Pound	1.4650	1.5100

Per 100

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	10.2.1992 Close	11.2.1992 Close
All-Share	136.82	137.53
Banking Sector	109.61	110.35
Insurance Sector	133.10	133.69
Industry Sector	177.20	177.89
Services Sector	154.34	155.05

December 31, 1990 - 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.7903/13	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1817/22	Canadian dollar
	1.6035/45	Deutsche marks
	1.8045/55	Dutch guilders
	1.4353/63	Swiss francs
	32.90/94	Belgian francs
	5.4600/50	French francs
	1204/1205	Italian lire
	127.30/40	Japanese yen
	5.8200/8300	Swedish crowns
	6.2850/2950	Norwegian crowns
	6.2150/2250	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	356.10/356.60	U.S. dollars



Alan Greenspan

Japan study
finds U.S.
workers more
productive
than Japanese

TOKYO (AP) — Offering its own contribution to the continuing debate over whose workers are the most productive, the labour ministry has said that by some measures American workers outproduce their Japanese counterparts.

The ministry divided the 1989 gross domestic product of each country by the number of workers in each country and found that American workers produce 1.62 times more than Japanese when the value of their work is calculated according to purchasing power.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa recently told parliament that America's work ethic was on the decline because college graduates were choosing high-paying jobs on Wall Street rather than in manufacturing.

That remark angered Americans already upset over comments last month by house speaker Yoshio Sakurachi, who said U.S. workers were lazy and sometimes illiterate.

According to the labour ministry, Americans surpassed the Japanese in terms of productivity per hour, partly because of the longer hours Japanese workers put in — 42.3 hours per week in 1990 compared with 38.2 hours for U.S. workers.

But when productivity is calculated without taking purchasing power into consideration, American workers only produced 1.09 times as much as their counterparts in Japan, it said.

According to another survey Japanese white collar workers around Tokyo work an average of 37.6 hours of overtime a month and complain of not having enough private time.

Recruit Research Co., a private research firm, also reported that 31.4 per cent of respondents said they work more than 50 hours of overtime a month.

Recruit questioned 3,047 male white collar workers chosen at random.

Asked about worries or unhappiness at work, 37.8 per cent responded that they had too little private time because of their busy work schedule, Recruit said.

The average Japanese worker worked 2,044 hours last year compared with 1,949 hours by Americans in 1990 and 1,642 hours by Germans, the labour ministry says.

Greenspan says Fed has done
enough to help U.S. economy

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (Agencies) — Federal Reserve (Fed) Board Chairman Alan Greenspan said Tuesday the central bank has cut interest rates enough to boost the stagnant U.S. economy, but is prepared to do more if necessary.

"We believe the amount of money now in the pipeline is adequate to return the economy onto a path of sustained recovery," he said in a speech before the annual conference of the Independent Bankers Association of America.

Financial markets have been speculating whether the Fed would ease credit again after the Labour Department reported last week that a surprising 91,000 jobs were lost in January while the unemployment rate stubbornly remained at 7.1 per cent.

Mr. Greenspan told the bankers the benefits of recent rate cuts by the Fed, including a pre-Christmas one percentage point cut in the discount rate, are still working their way through the economy and that he hoped economic growth would pick up soon.

His remarks echoed his test-

mony last week to the House Budget Committee.

The Dec. 20 cut in the discount rate, the interest the Fed charges banks for loans, brought the key rate to 3.5 per cent, a 27-year low. The central bank also allowed the federal funds rate, the interest banks charge each other for loans, to fall to a perceived target of four per cent.

Mr. Greenspan's speech Tuesday was the first public appearance of the Fed chairman since the policymaking Federal Open Market Committee met last week to discuss the course of central bank credit policy. He will outline those decisions next Wednesday in testimony before a House of Representatives banking subcommittee.

The Fed has come under increasing pressure to cut interest rates further since last Friday's jobless report. Mr. Greenspan said the outlook was uncertain and the central bank is still watching developments closely.

"If necessary, we will move toward an increased degree of monetary easing," he said.

The economy, he said, has been suffering from an excess of

debt taken on by consumers and businesses in the 1980s. As businesses and consumers work off that debt burden by paying off and refinancing loans to take advantage of lower interest rates, the economy should start to improve, he said.

The improvement in consumer and business balance sheets "will begin to become evident hopefully in the reasonably near future," he said.

Democratic and Republican senators alike sharply criticised Mr. Greenspan last week as doing too little, too late to revive the stagnant U.S. economy.

"Looking over the record of the last four years, there is much to be concerned about," said Senator Donald Riegle chairman of the Senate Banking Committee and a Democrat. "Poor economic performance is not just a recent or temporary phenomenon."

Senator Jake Garn, the senior Republican on the committee, said the Fed should have lowered interest rates sooner and more sharply last year to avoid the current stall.

Senator Alfonse d'Amato,

another Republican, agreed, saying "had we cut with greater dispatch, a great deal of the pain we have endured could have been minimised."

The senators spoke just hours after the Commerce Department said the U.S. economy, as measured by the gross domestic product, grew at a slow annual rate of 0.3 per cent in the last three months of 1991. The rise was so small that many economists are not sure whether the economy has emerged from recession.

In his last congressional appearance, on Jan. 10, Mr. Greenspan gave a preview of his defence. He noted that the central banks has cut short-term interest rates to the lowest level in a generation.

That, he said, is enough "by any historical standard" to get the economy moving again.

A business research group, the Conference Board, reported that despite lower interest rates consumer confidence in the economy retreated further last month, with many U.S. households even more pessimistic about their financial security than in late 1991.

Having received Saudi clearance

Alyemda, Al Yemenia to merge soon

SANAA (R) — Yemen's transport minister said Saudi Arabia had cleared the way for the merger of the national airlines of former North Yemen and South Yemen by agreeing to sell its 49 per cent stake in the North's Yemen Airways.

The minister, Saleh Abdullah Muthanna, was quoted by the Yemeni newspaper Al Jumhuriya Wednesday as saying that Yemen Airways, also known as Al Yemenia, and the former South Yemen carrier Alyemda would be merged in the "coming

few months."

"The Saudi side has agreed to terminate its partnership in Yemen Airways," the daily quoted Mr. Muthanna as saying. It gave no details on when or how the Saudi decision had been taken. The airlines are still operating as separate companies 21 months after the north and south were united in the Yemeni Republic.

Alyemda had refused to be merged with Yemen Airways until its northern counterpart was fully Yemeni-owned.

Mr. Muthanna said the minis-

try was working on modernising airports and renovating its fleet. Yemen Airways operates five Boeing 707 and 737 aircraft on international routes and two smaller planes on domestic flights. Alyemda owns five planes.

Yemen Airways has been since 1978 a joint-stock company in which Saudi Arabia holds 49 per cent of the shares. Its average annual gross profit before the Gulf crisis in 1990 was around 40 million riyals (\$4 million).

On Jan. 1 the Yemeni weekly

Al Ayyam quoted Saudi delegates to a meeting of Yemen Airways' board of directors in Sanaa as saying that Riyadh wanted to retain its stake in a sign of possible rapprochement between the two countries.

Saudi Arabia, Yemen's main aid donor before the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, had frozen its financial aid and expelled hundreds of thousands of Yemeni expatriates because of Sanaa's pro-Baghdad sympathies during the crisis.

BIS reports depressed banking
activity from tight lending conditions

BASEL, Switzerland (AP) — New loans to China, Thailand and South Korea and a turnaround for Midwest oil producers after the Gulf war helped brighten an otherwise dim banking record for 1991, according to an official survey.

New credits from Germany to the former Soviet Union reversed a 1½-year downward trend to countries of the former Soviet Bloc, the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) said in a report.

Overall, however, funds moving through the global banking and securities markets were "very low," the clearinghouse of the world's key central banks and banking countries said in its latest report for recession-plagued 1991.

BIS said tight lending policies characterised the nine-month period ending Sept. 30 covered in its report. Japan continued to

scale back its holdings in other countries, especially in Europe.

Countries in Asia were the largest takers of new loans, with the major borrowers being Thailand, China and South Korea, all of which also substantially increased their deposits with the BIS banks, it said.

Outstanding deposits by Middle Eastern members of OPEC rose by \$3.7 billion in the three months ending Sept. 30, the BIS said. Those deposits had declined by \$16.3 billion in the first half of 1991, which covered the war and the first phase of reconstruction.

Credits to Eastern Europe grew by \$1.3 billion in the third quarter, reversing eighteen months of consecutive decline.

Officially guaranteed credits by German banks to Moscow amounted to \$1.6 billion in new lending, said the BIS report, which covered the period just before the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Soviets added \$900 million to their deposits in the west during the third quarter, it said.

Banks' outstanding credits to Latin America declined by a further \$1.5 billion in the third quarter of 1991, compared with a \$4.7 billion decline recorded in the second quarter.

The BIS reporting area is made up of 18 industrial countries plus such banking headquarters as Bahamas, Bahrain, Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, the Nether-

lands Antilles and Singapore.

For a global view, BIS said there were major drops in banking activity during the first half of the year and little of the usual third quarter pickup.

It recorded a six per cent drop in cross-border claims among banks for the first nine months of 1991.

The Jordanian-Scandinavian
Friendship Association-Amman

announces to its members that due to the effects of the weather conditions, the planting of trees in the Scandinavian forest on Friday, Feb. 14, has been postponed to a new date which will be announced in due course.

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- Sabana, tel. 64311
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- Golden Palace, tel. 64501
- The National Music Conservatory tel. 64100

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in
Ya Mahallabia Ya

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- * computer forms and labels (by Mr. Low Kim Thye)
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Shevardnadze sees danger of coup in Commonwealth

BONN (Agencies) — Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has said the economic crisis and tensions in the armed forces could lead to a coup in Moscow.

Mr. Shevardnadze told Germany's ZDF Television Tuesday evening he was very worried about the situation in Russia and other republics in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

"There is a danger today (of a coup) and (this danger) could now be bigger than before the coup in August of last year," ZDF quoted him as saying.

"Events are being played out against an unfavourable background — a crisis in the economy, strong social tensions, poor living conditions for the people," he said.

Asked how disillusioned the Soviet army was, he said the armed forces were split between committed Democrats and officers increasingly frustrated with their falling living standards.

"It's hard to say who is stronger, but the fact that there is unrest in the army during such complicated developments makes me worried," Mr. Shevardnadze said.

The former minister expressed deep concern over the effect the republics' economic crisis would have on the future of the Commonwealth.

"If we do not succeed in fixing up the economy and finances in Russia and the other states, I can say with full certainty that rightist, probably reactionary politicians and powers will appear on the scene in place of today's democratic leaders and institutions," he said.

"And I must say, the people would support them. You cannot convince a people living in a miserable and starving country that they should support democratic institutions."

Mr. Shevardnadze said an alliance between right-wing nationalists and frustrated Com-

munist was also possible.

"I don't differentiate between them because they can and will unite in this situation," he said. "The hardest part is that the transition into this new situation somehow happened spontaneously, overnight," Mr. Shevardnadze said.

"The path to stability is still a long one. But an unstable Soviet Union is a gigantic danger. With its immense military potential, it is a gigantic danger for the whole world."

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, meeting with the Moscow diplomatic corps for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union, promised Tuesday to pursue an "honest, open and moral" foreign policy free of ideological constraints.

Mr. Yeltsin's speech in the ornate St. George's Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace did not break new ground, but reinforced his frequent theme of cooperation with the West in rebuilding Russia's economy.

"Today, perhaps for the first time in history, a real possibility exists to be rid of the East-West confrontation. The cold war is over," he told ambassadors from several dozen countries.

As humanitarian aid from the United States was being distributed in Moscow, Yeltsin spoke of the need for Western investment and alluded to the tens of thousands of people who rallied in the capital last Sunday for and against his price reforms.

"Economic reform is the major problem for us ... and the very first steps proved to be extremely painful," he said, according to a text released by the Russian government.

"The reform has yet to become irreversible, and today every effort, however small, is important if it facilitates changes in the Russian economy, including the efforts by the West."

"Every thousand dollars of investments enhances the stability of Russia, moves us further, from

(Communist) revenge, although we would not overestimate the danger," Mr. Yeltsin said.

"As last Sunday demonstrates ... the majority of Russians is immune to the Communist plague."

In a separate development, Germany angrily rejected Russia's calls for more money to finance the withdrawal of former Soviet troops from eastern Germany Tuesday and accused Moscow of violating their agreement.

The Finance Ministry said the Russians were demanding unrealistic prices for Soviet bases in eastern Germany which are being vacated by departing troops.

"They are refusing to approve the sale of military buildings financed from the budget of the Soviet Union by rejecting offers received in response to tender and demanding fantasy prices," the ministry said.

Economics Minister Juergen Moellmann said Bonn was already paying large sums for the troops pull-out as well as leading an international relief effort for former Soviet republics. He told Russia not to strain Bonn's generosity by demanding more.

"It does not help anybody in a situation like this ... to burden the atmosphere with unfounded demands," he said.

Both comments were couched in unusually strong words and reflected Bonn's mounting irritation with Russia.

Before Germany united in 1990, the former Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its soldiers from then-Communist east Germany by 1994 in return for around 14 billion marks (\$9 billion).

Germany has become the most generous Western backer of CIS.

According to Bonn's Foreign Ministry, Germany has put up 75 billion marks (\$48 billion) since late 1989 in emergency aid, payments for withdrawing Soviet troops, credit guarantees and trade subsidies to help the former superpower.

Russian aide denies aid being stolen

MOSCOW (R) — A senior Russian official on Wednesday dismissed reports that large amounts of foreign aid were being stolen, saying a strict system had been set up to prevent pilfering.

Alexander Zhitnikov, deputy head of coordinating foreign aid to Russia, told a news conference that reports in the local media suggesting aid from the United States and European Community (EC) members had been stolen were not true.

"Some reports say that 60 to 70 per cent of goods are not finding their way to their targets. That is nonsense," he said.

"We are working closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure reliable supplies."

The West launched a huge airlift of food and medicine to the struggling former Soviet republics Monday. Dubbed "Operation Provide Hope," it aims to deliver 18,000 tonnes of food and medicines over two weeks.

But it is dwarfed by the 185,000 tonnes of EC assistance currently being delivered to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in a bid to protect the young, elderly and low-waged.

The EC is selling its food and medicines at moderate prices in a bid to stabilise the market after the Russian government's price liberalisation on Jan. 2 sent goods soaring out of the reach of most people.

Western officials were worried their aid could be stolen by local mafias and corrupt distribution workers after parts of earlier shipments turned up on the black market.

But Mr. Zhitnikov said thefts were few and far between and dismissed them as a minor problem.

"We have carried out raids on various shops in a bid to catch those who might be stealing supplies," he said.

He said his officials were coordinating with their U.S. counterparts, who have also set up a monitoring team.

A U.S. embassy official said the airlift was proceeding as planned, with aircraft carrying food to land in Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Ukraine Wednesday.

"All is going normally," he said.

Mr. Zhitnikov, who had earlier criticised the airlift for being very costly, said Wednesday he regarded it as the start of large-scale Western help.

"Last year Russia got 240,000 tonnes of aid. This year we expect around one million tonnes," he said.

German charity groups alone have sent 75,581 tonnes of food and medicines since September 1990. The goods are mostly donated while the government helps transport them.

The daily Croatian newspaper Vecernji List said Croatia was being blackmailed and blamed the rift squarely on the United Nations. "It is a question of blackmail," it said.

"First Croatia is told what to expect when peacekeeping forces arrive. Then when Croatia asks for an explanation, a campaign is waged against the Croatian authorities saying that they are against the deployment of the 'blue helmets' (peacekeeping troops)." It added in an editorial.

Croatian officials deny they oppose the U.N. plan.

Croatian radio said one Croatian soldier was killed and two injured when the frontline town of Vinkovci in eastern Croatia came under heavy rocket fire Tuesday night and local commanders said attacks on the town were increasing.

Belgrade and Croatian media Tuesday reported the biggest outbreak of fighting since the truce was agreed on Jan. 3. Three Serb irregulars and one Croatian militiaman were killed.

Croatian radio said the eastern villages of Nard and Petrijevci came under heavy fire Wednesday, sending people into shelters.

Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency, quoting Yugoslav army sources, reported machine-gun fire at three points around the Adriatic port of Dubrovnik.

The European Community has expressed fear that the truce between Croatian militia and Serb irregulars backed by the federal army could collapse.

Many Yugoslavs fear fighting could resume with the onset of warmer weather. More than 6,000 people have been killed since Zagreb declared independence in June.

The U.N. needs the truce to hold firm before it considers sending 10,000 peacekeeping troops.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman told the U.N. he had no further preconditions for the deployment, but presented a list of criteria.

Baker sets terms for U.S. recognition of Azerbaijan

BAKU, Azerbaijan (Agencies) — Secretary of State James Baker said Wednesday U.S. recognition of the former Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan would depend on the country's record on human rights and democracy.

Speaking after a meeting with Azeri officials, Mr. Baker said talks had centred on relations between the two countries and on the troubled region of Nagorno-Karabakh, administered by Azerbaijan but populated largely by Armenians.

"Recognition of Azerbaijan and the establishment of diplomatic ties will depend on five principles — human rights, democracy, a free market economy, the recognition of existing borders and cooperation and coexistence with the other former Soviet republics," he said.

Baker was visiting the Azeri capital Baku as part of a whirlwind tour of some of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union.

He has already visited the neighbouring Republic of Armenia and is due to visit Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan before heading arms control talks in Moscow and heading home.

Azeri President Ayaz Mutalibov said he saw Mr. Baker's visit as a major step towards establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. "We hope the visit will promote solutions to our existing problems," he said.

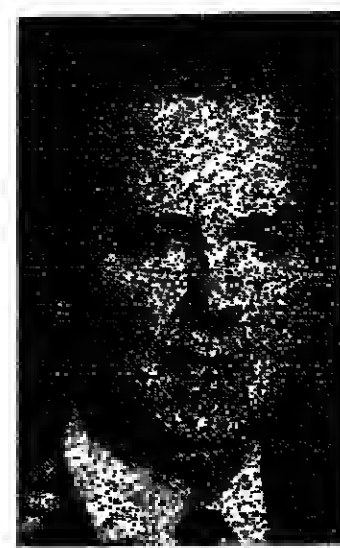
Mr. Baker told journalists it was important to find a peaceful solution in Nagorno-Karabakh, where over 1,000 people have died in four years of violence.

"It seems to me that the job of creating a new independent nation and bringing it into a common community of nations ... is a big enough job ... that it does not need to be burdened by a continuing dispute like Nagorno-Karabakh," he said.

"The problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is a very difficult one that needs to be resolved peacefully, through negotiations."

U.S. officials have said Mr. Baker would take no sides in the issue during his current visit, the first by an American secretary of state to the two newly independent states.

However, the United States has already drawn a distinction between the two countries by



James Baker

establishing full diplomatic ties with Armenia and withholding them from Azerbaijan.

The distinction was also reflected in Mr. Baker's programme. He stayed overnight in Armenia and spent only a few hours in Azerbaijan before leaving for Turkmenistan.

Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannissian told reporters Tuesday the conflict must be solved or "it will continue to be a hotbed of instability."

"Azerbaijan is trying to impose a military solution on a political problem," said Mr. Hovannissian, an American who came to Armenia to help the country recover from the 1988 earthquake and stayed. He was appointed foreign minister last year.

The president of Azerbaijan says his government will consider appealing for U.N. peacekeeping troops if no other solution is found in its dispute with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Asked about the possible sending of a United Nations force, Mr. Mutalibov told the Milan daily Corriere Della Sera in an interview published Wednesday: "If our peace attempts run up against the usual wall of incoherence, then we will put this problem before our parliament, which decides (on this)."

"As an independent state, we have the right to turn to the United Nations at any time," Mr. Mutalibov said.

More than 1,000 people have been killed in four years of fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh, populated mainly by Armenians

but located in and administered by Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mutalibov said his government would soon present what he called a constructive and detailed programme to all parties involved.

"The first thing necessary is an accord on a ceasefire. Following this armed forces must withdraw, guaranteeing the people's safety at the same time."

"Third, we must start real negotiations on the status of this autonomy," he said.

Armenian militants began a major offensive in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh Tuesday, capturing an Azerbaijani village and killing several people, Russian media reported.

The exact death toll was uncertain. About 20 people were wounded, including women and children, in the tank and artillery assault on the village of Malybeli, according to the region's interior department.

The fighting took place as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived for talks in Yerevan, the Armenian capital, and as a special commission of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) headed to the battle zone.

The territorial dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan has ancient roots. Mediation efforts by Russian President Boris Yeltsin have failed to resolve it.

The CSCE special commission, headed by Czechoslovak official Karel Schwarzenberg, was scheduled to fly from Prague to Nagorno-Karabakh Wednesday. Its goal is to monitor compliance with human rights and to recommend ways to settle the conflict, the Russian Information Agency said.

The village of Malybeli, in the Shusha district of Nagorno-Karabakh, had been surrounded by Armenian militants for several days, according to TASS, now known as the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia-TASS. About 135 missiles and artillery shells were fired Monday at the settlement, an Azerbaijani stronghold, TASS said.

Armenians have accused Azerbaijani forces of shelling the region's main city, Stepanakert, from Malybeli.

On Monday, four Armenians and 20 Azerbaijanis were reported killed in a day-long battle near the village of Kichan.

Pakistan police shoot militants, kill 3

CHINARI, Pakistan (R) — Pakistani police opened fire on militants trying to cross into Indian-ruled Kashmir Wednesday, killing three of them, doctors said.

They said at least 12 people were hit by gunfire among at least 50 injured in clashes between the police and marchers.

Two of the dead were young men shot in the head as the militants pushed back security forces, the doctors said.

Two policemen were among more than 20 people seriously hurt in the clash, including a senior government official nearly lynched by the enraged crowd after he fell from a cliff where his men were throwing rocks on the protesters.

Militant leader Amanullah Khan was reported by members of his Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) to be marching towards the ceasefire line separating Pakistan-ruled Kashmir from the Indian part of the territory.

His men had earlier demolished a blockade of barbed wire on a bridge outside Chioari, some 10 kilometres from the border at Chakothi.

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said to Islamabad his government was sorry it had had to use force against what he called "freedom-fighters" and urged India to solve the Kashmir issue without delay.

But he told reporters the authorities had to do it because they would not allow "innocent people to be led before Indian firing squads."

"We regret what we have to use force against freedom-fighters," he said.

Earlier security forces firing tear gas confronted several

thousand militants determined to break through another barbed wire barrier nearer the frontier.

Police at Dooga Bridge, about six kilometres from the ceasefire line dividing Kashmir, repulsed all efforts to get near the barbed wire entanglements.

The marchers have vowed to storm the frontier to show solidarity with a Muslim revolt in two-thirds of Kashmir under Indian rule.

The two countries have fought two of their three wars since independence from Britain in 1947 over Kashmir.

The depleted band of activists gathered on a cold wintry morning in Chinari to hear Amanullah Khan tell them they faced the ultimate test of their loyalty to Kashmir.

The numbers were fewer than started from the Pakistan-ruled Azad (Free) Kashmir's capital.

Aquino rejects election ceasefire with rebels

MANILA (Agencies) — President Corazon Aquino Wednesday rejected a proposal that she declare a unilateral ceasefire in her war with Communist guerrillas and army rebels, saying the idea was dangerous.

Mrs. Aquino also reaffirmed her full backing for former Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos in the presidential elections due in May, thus quashing rumours that she might withdraw her support from the ex-army general.

Senator Wigberto Taada Tuesday urged Mrs. Aquino to declare an immediate 90-day unilateral ceasefire in the government campaign against all armed rebel groups to ensure peaceful elections.

Gen. Tanada also proposed peace talks between the government and the rebels, including the Communist New People's Army and dissident soldiers linked to six coup attempts against Mrs. Aquino.

"It should be irresponsible and a dereliction of duty for the government's military and police forces ... to unilaterally declare a suspension of offensive military operations even as the threat of disturbances from rebel groups continues," the presidential palace said in a statement.

The Philippines is to elect a new president, a new congress and more than 17,000 local officials in the May 11 polls.

Mrs. Aquino, who is not standing for a second term, stirred

speculation that she might drop Gen. Ramos as her candidate when she told reporters Tuesday that she might consider a unified administration election ticket to prevent the comeback of former first lady Imelda Marcos, an opposition presidential candidate.

The administration is split between the Aquino-backed Gen. Ramos and Congress speaker Ramon Mitra, candidate of the government party LDP (Democratic Filipino Struggle).

Political sources said Mr. Mitra would likely emerge as the standard bearer in a unified administration ticket did not have a strong political machinery of Mr. Mitra.

But Mr. Garrucho claimed Gen. Ramos' popularity would compensate for this weakness.

Mrs. Aquino signed into law Wednesday a landmark bill to outlaw discrimination against Filipino women and channel funds to help the poorest.

Until now, married women were not allowed to borrow money from a bank or apply for a passport without their husband's consent.

The women in Development and Nation-Building Act aims to make women a force for economic development in a country where the macho male is still the predominant stereotype despite six years of female presidency.

Ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos once advised Mrs.

Aquino she should stay in the bedroom instead of becoming involved in politics.

Under the newly-signed law, women will have equal access to government and private credit, and will be accorded equal opportunity for admission and training in all military schools.

Government agencies are directed to review and revise all regulations and procedures to remove any gender bias.

"This law does not only reaffirm the vital role of women in nation-building. It declares with candor the policy of this state to require that a substantial portion of development assistance be set aside for development programmes for women," Mrs. Aquino said after the signing.

The act mandates the national economic and development authority to set aside a portion of foreign assistance funds to be used by women for income-generating projects, especially in rural areas, said Senator Santanina Rasal, one of two authors of the bill.

"This way, we empower women economically and make them participate actively in economic development right where they are," she said.

Ms. Rasal called the act "progressive landmark legislation which seeks not only to make women truly equal partners of men but to make women a force for economic development."

TOKYO (R) — A giant 262 kilogram Samoan-American sumo wrestler did his bit to tilt the huge U.S. trade imbalance with Japan — he married a Japanese. America's hulkiest export, 28-year-old Konishiki, married Sumika Shioda, a fashion model from Hokkaido Island, in a private Christian ceremony at a Tokyo hotel. Nicknamed "dunk truck", Konishiki — real name Salevava Atisanoe — is the heaviest sumo wrestler of modern times. According to press reports, his bride weighs five times less. Guests said Konishiki received a congratulatory message from President George Bush.

"Although I'm married now I have no plans for any change (in my career plans)," Konishiki told a news conference after the ceremony. He met his bride in Hokkaido in 1987. Dressed in traditional black wedding kimono and speaking fluent Japanese, Konishiki said he had applied for Japanese nationality, but it was a difficult procedure that would take several years.

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COLUMN

Charles, Diana visit British cemetery in India

NEW DELHI (AP) — Prince Charles and Princess Diana paid homage at a cemetery for British soldiers who died in World War II. The royal couple laid a wreath at the site of remembrance and later went around the cemetery containing graves of 1,200 of the 25,000 soldiers who died here. The cemetery also has 99 graves of those who died during World War I. India was a British colony until it gained independence in 1947. The royal couple joined President Ramaswamy Venkataraman for a stroll through the Mogul Garden, part of the 340-room presidential palace. They lunched with Mr. Venkataraman and his family before leaving for Jaipur, capital of the desert state of Rajasthan.

Boy, 11, gets record car accident payout

MELBOURNE (R) — An 11-year-old boy who sued his mother and another driver over a car crash which left him a quadriplegic was awarded a record \$2.2 million dollars (\$3.9 million) by an Australian court Wednesday. Shane Gladwin was the front-seat passenger in his mother's car when it was forced to swerve into a wall to avoid another vehicle, the Melbourne supreme court was told. Shane, who can only breathe with the aid of a ventilator, sued his mother and the other driver. The damages, the largest single accident payout in an Australian civil damages case, will be paid by insurers. His father, Lloyd Gladwin, told reporters outside the court that his son had handled the case well. "He said this morning when we left, 'I'll be a celebrity for the day and then I'll be forgotten about,'" Gladwin said. "I told him that was probably right." Shane's first wish was to visit a new fun park, Movieworld, in the northern state of Queensland. His father said.

U.S. sumo giant weds Japanese model

TOKYO (R) — A giant 262 kilogram Samoan-American sumo wrestler did his bit to tilt the huge U.S. trade imbalance with Japan — he married a Japanese. America's hulkiest export, 28-year-old Konishiki, married Sumika Shioda, a fashion model from Hokkaido Island, in a private Christian ceremony at a Tokyo hotel. Nicknamed "dunk truck", Konishiki — real name Salevava Atisanoe — is the heaviest sumo wrestler of modern times. According to press reports, his bride weighs five times less. Guests said Konishiki received a congratulatory message from President George Bush.

Three-year-old Australian boy appears in court

SYDNEY (R) — A three-year-old Australian boy was forced to appear in court over a dispute with a neighbour until embarrassed authorities withdrew his summons. A summons naming Daniel Mullin, his father Darren and Darren's wife Emma was served at their Fremantle home in Western Australia Sunday, Australian Broadcasting Corp. (ABC) radio reported Tuesday. "I just thought it was a joke," Darren Mullin told the ABC. Emma Mullin said she explained to the court officer serving the summons that her son was just three. "He looked shocked... (but) he just wrote it down in his bit of paper and said it was an official document and he had to deliver it," she said. "I mean, really, three years old and served a summons." Darren said he tried to persuade a justice of the peace to cancel the summons naming his son, before approaching the police and court authorities. But a court clerk told him it did not matter how old the boy was, he would have to appear or get a criminal record. When the family appeared, neighbour Frances Pendine withdrew the damages and injury claim against the boy and the court cancelled his summons. The radio reported.